AD MAJOREM DEI SANCTÆQUE MARIÆ GLORIAM.

The Saints and Servants of God.

LIVES OF THE CANONIZED SAINTS,

AND

The Servants of God,

BEATIFIED, OR DECLARED VENERABLE BY AUTHORITY,

And others who are commonly reputed among Catholics to have died in the odour of sanctity, especially in modern times.

1. It is proposed to publish a Series of such Lives, translated from the Italian, French, Spanish, German, and Latin, in small 8vo. volumes, of about 400 pages each, and to bring out four volumes in the year.

2. The Editor and Translators not making any profit on the work, the volumes will be sold as cheaply as possible. Each vol. will be sold separately, and will be complete in itself, except when one Life occupies more volumes than one, and the price not exceed 4s.

3. The works translated from will be in most cases the Lives drawn up *for* or *from* the processes of canonization or beatification, as being more full, more authentic, and more replete with anecdote, thus enabling the reader to become better acquainted with the Saint's disposition and spirit; while the simple matter-of-fact style of the narrative is, from its unobtrusive character, more adapted for spiritual reading than the views and generalizations, and apologetic extenuations of more recent biographers.

4. The objects of the friends who have jointly undertaken this task have been—1. To supply English Catholics with a cabinet-library of interesting as well as edifying reading, especially for families, schools, and religious refectories, which would for many reasons be particularly adapted for these times, and would with God's blessing act as a counter influence to the necessarily deadening and chilling effects which the neighbourhood of heresy and the consequent prevalence of earthly principles and low views of grace

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may have on the temper and habits of mind even of the faithful;—2. To present to our other countrymen a number of samples of the fruit which the system, doctrine, and moral discipline established by the holy and blessed Council of Trent have produced, and which will be to inquirers really in earnest about their souls, an argument more cogent than any that mere controversy can allege; and 3. To satisfy a humble desire which they feel to spread the honour and love of the ever-blessed Queen of Saints, by showing how greatly an intense devotion to her aided in forming those prodigies of heroic virtue with which the Holy Ghost has been pleased to adorn the Church since the schism of Luther, *more than in almost any previous times*, and whose actions, with a few exceptions, are known to English laymen only in a very general way, and from meagre abridgments; while the same motive will prevent the Series being confined to modern saints *exclusively*.

5. The work is published with the permission and approval of superiors. Every volume containing the Life of a person not yet canonized or beatified by the Church will be prefaced by a protest in conformity with the decree of Urban VIII., and in all Lives which introduce questions of mystical theology great care will be taken to publish nothing which has not had adequate sanction, or without the reader being informed of the nature and amount of the sanction.

Lives already Published.

No.
1, 2 .... S. Philip Neri, 1595.
3 .... Companions of S. Philip Neri.
4 .... S. Thomas of Villanova, 1555. S. Francis Solano, 1610.
5 .... S. Rose of Lima 1617. B. Colomba of Rieti, 1501. S. Juliana Falconieri, 1340.
6 .... Fathers of the Oratory. B. Sebastian Valfre, 1710. De Santi, 1650. Matteucci, 1629.
7, 8 .... S. Ignatius, 1556.
9 .... B. Sebastian of Apparizio, 1600.
10, 11, 12, 13, 14 S. Alphonso Liguori, 1787.
15 .... Companions of St Alphonso Liguori.
16 .... V. Father Claver. S. J. 1654. Cardinal Odescalchi, S. J., 1841.
17 .... F. Anchieta, S. J. V. Alvera von Virmundt, 1649. V. John Berchmans, S. J., 1621.
18 .... S. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi, 1607.
19 .... Ven. Benedict Joseph Labre, 1783.
20 .... Fathers of the Oratory: V. Fabrizio dall' Aste, 1655. F. Mariano Sozzini, 1680.
21, 22 .... V. Margaret Mary Alacoque, 1690. S. Catherine of Bologna, 1463.
23 .... S. Joseph Calasanctius, 1648. B. Ippolito Galantini, 1619.
Uniform with the above. Pope Benedict XIV., on Heroic Virtue, vol. 1.
Essay on Canonization, by the Rev. F. Faber, Cong. Orat.

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This list is not put forward as by any means complete, or as intending to exclude other Lives, especially those of the older Saints. The Editor will be glad to hear from any who may wish to satisfy their devotion, and employ their leisure to the greater glory of God and our dear Lady, by contributing translations of the Lives either of older Saints or of those mentioned in this list, or any others who have died in the odour of sanctity, and are not named here. The arduousness of the undertaking makes it very necessary for him earnestly to repeat his petition for coadjutors in his labours; and perhaps he may at the present time urge it more forcibly than before. Eight volumes of the Series are now published; the work has obtained an extensive circulation both in America and England; besides the many testimonies to its utility received from very various quarters among Catholics, not a few who are still unhappily out of the One Fold have borne witness to its attracting influence upon them; the increasing demand for books of devotion and ascetical divinity, while it proves the growing thirst after Christian perfection amongst us, shows how necessary as well as useful a Series of Lives of the Saints at length and in detail must be:—these are all so many grounds on which the Editor may rest his claim for co-operation. Although many Lives are advertised as being in hand, yet the translators have in most cases so many other important avocations that a still larger number of labourers are required to feed the press steadily, and to enable the Editor to go on keeping his promise to the public.

Circumstances delayed the publication of Pope Benedict XIV. on Heroic Virtue; but the first volume is now published, the second is ready for the press, and some progress has been made in the translation of the third and concluding volume. It is a portion of that pontiff's great book on the Canonization of the Saints, and contains a most interesting account of the tests used by the Church in examining ecstasies, visions, raptures, the higher degrees of mental prayer, and the practice of bodily austerities, and supernatural penances. It will be bound and lettered uniformly with the Series of the Modern Saints, and will be found replete with most interesting anecdotes, as well as being of immense use to spiritual directors, and to all students of ascetical theology and Christian philosophy. An original dissertation on Mystical Theology will be prefixed to one of the future volumes of the Series, in which an attempt will be made to distinguish between the heights of Catholic contemplation and the vagaries of recent heretics, and the doctrine of the most judicious and discreet Mystics will be stated and explained from the authors most approved among theolo-

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gians, and such general information given on the subject as will be interesting and edifying to ordinary readers.

A number of the portraits of the Saints prefixed to most of the volumes are to be had separately , on sale at the Publishers, for those who may wish to increase their collection of religious engravings, or to distribute pictures of the Saints to whom they may have a devotion; and the Essay on Canonization, published with the first volume of St. Alphonso may now be purchased in a separate form. The editor will be glad to receive any suggestion which may assist him either in meeting the wishes of subscribers, or in making the Series a more complete and perfect Library of Catholic Biography.

F. W. FABER,
PRIEST OF THE ORATORY.

London,
Feast of St. Francis, 1850.

PRINTED BY RICHARDSON AND SON, DERBY.

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V. JOHN DE BRITTO, S. J.

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The Saints and Servants of God.

THE LIVES

OF

FATHER PAUL SEGNERI, S. J.,

FATHER PETER PINAMONTI, S. J.,

AND THE

VEN. JOHN DE BRITTO, S. J.,

WITH AN

ESSAY ON CATHOLIC HOME MISSIONS,

BY THE REV. F. FABER

PRIEST OF THE ORATORY.

"Gaude Maria Virgo, cunctas hæreses sola interemisti in universo mundo."—*Antiph. Ecclesiæ.*

LONDON:

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We hereby approve and sanction the Series of Lives of the Canonized and Beatified Saints, the Servants of God declared Venerable, and others commonly reputed to have died in the odour of sanctity, now in course of publication by the Congregation of the Oratory of St. Philip Neri, and we cordially recommend it to the Faithful, as calculated to promote the glory of God and of His Saints, the increase of devotion, and the spread of our holy Religion.

Given at Westminster, the Feast of the Nativity of our B. Lady, A. D. 1851.

N. Card. Wiseman

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TO

THE REGULAR CLERGY

OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH IN ENGLAND,

THE CHILDREN

OF ST. BENEDICT AND ST. BERNARD,

ST. DOMINICK AND ST. FRANCIS,

AND THE SONS

OF THE HOLY IGNATIUS,

THE GREAT MASTER OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE,

AND THE NURSING-FATHER OF SAINTS AND MARTYRS,

WHO,

IN THE STRAITNESS AND NEGLECT

OF THEIR UNHONOURED CLOISTERS,

OR THE CHEERLESS SOLITUDE

OF THEIR HIRED LODGING,

HAVE JOYFULLY EMBRACED THE POVERTY OF JESUS,

AND EARNED BY LOVING ZEAL

THE CROWN OF MARTYRDOM,

AND WHO,

THROUGH SCENES OF AWFUL SACRILEGE,

AND TIMES OF BITTER PERSECUTION,

THROUGH THE LONG AND WEARY VISITATION

OF ACTIVE MALICE OR OF COLD CONTEMPT,

HAVE PERPETUATED,

AMONGST THEIR UNWORTHY COUNTRYMEN,

THE BLESSED LINEAGE

OF THEIR HOLY FOUNDERS.

ST. WILFRID'S,
FEAST OF ST. BERNARD,
M. DCCC. XLVII.

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PROTESTATIO.

Cum SS. D. N. Urbanus Papa VIII. die 13 Martii 1625 in Sacra Congregatione S. R. et Universalis Inquisitionis Decretum ediderit, idemque confirmaverit die 5 Junii 1634 quo inhibuit imprimi libros Hominum, qui Sanctitate, seu Martyrii fama celebres e vita migraverunt, gesta, miracula, vel revelationes, seu quæcumque beneficia, tanquam eorum intercessionibus a Deo accepta continentes, sine recognitione, atque approbatione Ordinarii, et quæ hactenus sine ea impressa sunt, nullo modo vult censeri approbata. Idem autem Sanctissimus die 5 Junii 1631 ita explicaverit, ut nimirum non admittantur Elogia Sancti, vel Beati absolute, et quæ cadunt super Personam, bene tamen ea, quæ cadunt super mores, et opinionem; cum protestatione in principio, quod iis nulla adsit auctoritas ab Ecclesia Romana, sed fides tantum sit penes Auctorem. Huic Decreto, ejusque confirmationi, et declarationi, observantia, et reverentia, qua pars est, insistendo; profiteor me haud alio sensu, quidquid in hoc libro refero, accipere, aut accipi ab ullo velle, quam quo ea solent, quæ humana dumtaxat auctoritate, non autem Divina Catholicæ Romanæ Ecclesiæ, aut Sanctæ Sedis Apostolicæ, nituntur. Iis tantummodo exceptis, quos eadem Sancta Sedes, Sanctorum, Beatorum, aut Martyrum catalogo adscripsit.

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PREFACE.

The Lives of Fathers Segneri and Pinamonti are translated from short Italian Lives published by Marietti at Turin; and the Life of the Venerable De Britto is from the French of Father De Beauvais, S. J., published at Paris in 1746. The Introduction on Catholic Home Missions has run to such a length that no room has been left to say anything about Foreign Missions or on the question of the Malabar Rites, and the conduct of the Holy See on that controversy. But a subsequent volume will give us the opportunity of recurring to this most interesting subject at some length.

The Oratory. London.
Sept. 3, 1851.

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ON CATHOLIC HOME MISSIONS.

The especial work of the Church in all ages has been to multiply the harvest of our Lord's dear Passion by the salvation of souls. She has done this in different ways, according as the times have differed; but, however various her means, she has never desisted from her work. She has not adopted any one solitary method, and kept to it in a dry and exclusive way, calling upon sinners to come to her and be converted by certain preconcerted formalities. Such was not the model shown her by our Lord. She has, as He would have her, left her place and gone after the strayed sheep. Charity has led her to seek the lost ones in the wilderness, when she would rather have abided in the green pastures by the water-courses with those who had never wandered. While in other matters she has resisted the world's course and stemmed it, in this she has often followed the world's lead, not to the concession of one tittle of evangelical morality, but with the charitable condescension of a mother who humours in things lawful that she may win to higher and more exalted paths. And as when she has resisted the world, the world has hated her, so when she has followed it, as the mother follows the wolf who has borne

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her young away, the same world has pretended to take scandal at her laxity.

Her life is zeal for souls. To this instinct she has been ever true. In this time or in that she may have lost seeming dignity by the fond fervour of her charity, and the bold safety of her multiplied condescensions. She may have lacked in dry philanthrophy, in stateliness of reserved condescension, in pompous admonition, in effective rebuke, in respectable censoriousness, in a successful police-regulation of the externals of civic and rustic morality, and in the virtue afraid to sympathize with sinners, lest it should make light of sin. Such matters do not belong to her. She has to save souls, not to moralize the surface of society, or varnish the conventions of civilized life. A "*Satan Respectable*," as Michelet calls England, is not a Catholic chef-d'œuvre. The eyes of the Church have been fixed upon the Person of our Lord. Her end has been the fruit of His Passion. Her thoughts, her sympathies, her feelings, have been in time and tune with the beatings of His Sacred Heart. When she has pictured Him to herself, it has been as pale, and faint, and footsore on the wall of Jacob's well, or stooping to write upon the temple floor, or with Magdalene at His feet, and His indignant defence of her costly penance on His tongue, because all these mysteries taught her how to deal with sinning souls. She has been prodigal of His Precious Blood; for was not He Himself a very spendthrift of it? She has at heart this truth, and no truth lies nearer

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to her heart, that the only right zeal for the outraged Majesty of God is that which finds its vent in the conversion of the offender, and obliterates his offence with the washing of the Saviour's Blood.

O there are no bounds to her charity for souls, because there is no bound to her love of Jesus Crucified! And the one love plays into the other's hands. Her missioners as they go along the road tell the beads of our Lady's Dolours, a favourite devotion of those who spend themselves for souls. Why is it that they pause so long upon that second dolour, the Flight into Egypt? A good missioner is always a man of an interior life. He muses on that mystery; the Creator of the world has come among His creatures, and when He is but six weeks old, He has to fly before them like a thief. He has given no sign but weeping; He has no army but S. Joseph; He has no strength but the sweetness of His own weakness; He has no treasure but His Mother, and His Mother's humility and His Mother's purity; and what wants the world with them? yet He must away; wickedness has scented Him, and is already on His track. Over the desert, whose sands are counted in His wisdom, for He made them all, He must away; and it is not the burden that she bears which is Mary's grief, but it is her knowledge that He is who He is, and yet that men do not love Him. By the fire of this thought, the zeal of the missioner is all inflamed. What will he not do, what will he not suffer, that men may come to the knowledge and the love of Jesus? By the merits

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of her burning broken heart, Mary shall get him strength to suffer a life-long martyrdom of vulgar and ignoble toil for the good of souls. Has not she too felt what it was to love Jesus? That third dolour, the Three Day's Loss, that it was which fitted her to be the Queen of apostles, the Mother of missionaries. He has drunk deeply at this fountain also; and when he gazes on the multitudinous souls who have lost Jesus by mortal sin, and reck not of their loss, O how is his spirit moved within him!

See what zeal makes of him! To preach is to him a sweeter rest than silence; to toil over hill and dale in wind and wet and cold is his garden of delights; to be a dreary drudge for half a century in the intolerable confessional, is, as S. Philip found it, actual recreation to tired spirit and to aching limb; to be undignifiedly cloistered in the smoke and fret of unwholesome cities, is to him the liberty and freshness of the mountain tops; to lower himself to the vulgar lowness, or to bear with the uncivil petulance of sinners, is a joyous sympathy with the patience of Jesus when He was three years' novice master to those slow-hearted disciples; to invent all modes of making the yoke light to those who had better serve from fear than be lost for lack of love, and to save the honour of precepts, yet rob them of their native gravity by mild interpretations, is to him a good duplicity approved by the Incarnate Wisdom when He knew how to magnify His Father's law, yet save the victim taken in adultery. He is a man of one idea, which yet can expand

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into ten thousand. He is beside himself with love of souls. The Church makes him what he is, and then uses him as men would say unmercifully. He must set the world's judgment at defiance; fame, and time, and health, and spirits, all must be sacrificed in the work. Superiors may be against him; good men his foes. The Church herself may doubt him; he may die behind a cloud. What if life be shortened, no matter, other missioners are growing up, and there must be no slackness in saving souls. Xavier's failing limbs, Philip's fiery heart, Segneri's bleeding feet, Pinamonti's ceaseless headache, Camillus's wounded leg, Alphonso's palsied frame, Calasanctius's degraded order and work undone,—they matter not; there must be no rest, no truce; what *does* matter is continuous work, continuous sacrifice for souls. He who sat by the patriarch's well, pale and faint and footsore, and yet forgot His thirst when an unconverted sinner came within His reach, He who gazed far down upon the cold sparkling element which He had created, and yet thirsted more, O infinitely more, after the unconverted heart of an abandoned and uninteresting sinner; He it is to whom the Church is ever pointing; and when the brain is overwrought with fixed toil, and the voice gone with preaching, and the ear dulled with incessant hearing of confessions, and the cramped limb aching with fatigue, and the tired temper outworn with the rudeness of the selfish sinner, and the very citadel of pure thoughts assailed by a host of besieging horrors, then the Church whispers to her missioners, Now

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you have your exceeding great reward, for now you share the weariness of Jesus at the Well!

It is this instinct for souls which lies at the bottom of full one half of the modern objections to the Church. It is this which gives to her moral theology an appearance of laxity, and to her precepts a look of dry formality. It is this, which, in her conflict with modern society and modern sin, makes men fancy that she has herself drunk deeply of the spirit of the world, and is tainted by it. It is this which causes her to be so easy in permitting the introduction of new forms of devotion, and in allowing the multiplicity of feasts. It is this which makes her be, in the eyes of those without, so recklessly profuse in the granting of indulgences. It is this which causes her to condescend, to our filial eyes so gracefully, to what passes for vulgar, undignified, and popularity-hunting, in her way of doing good. It is this which makes her relax discipline to the extent of being a scandalum Pharisæorum to those who have no discipline at all. It is this which makes her appear inconsistent in her political conduct in different countries: in Ireland pressing to their least welcome conclusions the full rights of the English constitution, simply for the interest of souls; and, for the same interest no less, strengthening the cause of order in the kingdom of Naples, and abandoning legitimist romance in the French republic! We cannot expect that aliens from her fold should see or admit this. They must first have crowded confessionals, and a tradition in their administration of them.

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They must be day and night in this intimate struggle with the sins of the masses. It must be to them not a theory, but a matter of every day duty, before they will be in a condition even to pass judgment upon the Church. As well may a blind man claim for himself infallibility in deciding about colours, as a protestant think he can tell us anything worth hearing about the practical working of the Church. Protestantism does but skim over the surface of things; it has no acquaintance with the depth of the masses; it has no suspicion of what is going on in the manifold heart of the multitudes. It does not know what is wanted, and therefore can have no intelligent opinion whether this or that is a good means of getting at it. What can be more decorous, more imposing, more really kind and liberal to the people than the Protestant establishment? What would the poor do without it? Yet every one knows that these same poor have no loyalty to it, nay, that their hearts are more with the coarse tyranny of the unprepossessing Wesleyans, than with the mild, considerate, and good-natured rule of Anglicans. Strange that it should be so! Strange that Anglicanism should have so much in it to admire and to respect, such various advantages, such glorious live materials, such wonderful men, so much living and energizing good, and yet that the bulk of the populace should love it so little! The gift is not with the Establishment; truly she is lifted up, but men are not drawn unto her. How different is it even with the shabby mien, the undignified poverty, the crippled gait,

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the unattractive exterior of God's true Church in this unhappy land! The gift is with her; and so she wins even though she scarce puts out her powers.

There is no part of the Church where this instinct for souls is not to be found at work. Multitudes who are leading but ordinary and lukewarm lives themselves, would hardly be easy if they did not belong to some confraternity which imposed upon them intercessory prayer for others. To make or to get Novenas and Triduos, to write to convents and schools for prayers, to have masses said, and to recite rosaries, or to beg extra communions of their confessors, simply to get the conversion of some Anglican minister, of whom they know nothing more than that he is a good man and near to the faith, these things are no marks of any extraordinary seriousness, or even of men aiming at perfection. They come natural to a catholic; he hardly goes through any process of self-persuasion in doing them; they come to him of themselves, as the workings of an instinct on which probably he has never reflected for five minutes in his life. Again, how frequently is the confessor of little children besieged by such petitions as, "Father! may I pray that papa, or mamma, may become a catholic? May I say such or such a prayer for them?" Yet no one has put the child up to it: it has a growing sense of discomfort in the matter, simply because it is a catholic. We have had experience on both sides of the question, and have never heard (of course there will be exceptions) of the protestant children

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in the case of mixed marriages being similarly troubled, or finding in it a source of real childish suffering, causing their gay sunshine to be for seasons overcast.

Again, there is a good father living at peace in the retirement of his cloister, the Blessed Sacrament an inmate of the house, and all things round him which breathe of prayer, and happy mortification. What is his task-work in his cell? Perhaps for ten, twenty, thirty years, he is compiling a system of moral theology. While rigid to excess with himself, bound by vow to tend towards perfection, and looking at every duty through the live-long day by the light rather of counsel than of precept, for the love of others, and those earth's worst and coldest-hearted sinners, he is intently studying the lawful, not the perfect, drawing the line between what is mortal and what is venial as finely as he can, stretching to its utmost limit the elastic spirit of dispensation, investigating the lowest possible amount of good dispositions on which an absolution may be made to rest, and in the treatment of one part of his weary and distasteful subject, passing through the very fires, trembling yet unscathed, unscathed in truth because trembling; and their hearts must be coarse indeed who see not in this an exercise of charity which is positively heroic; for the keenness of the suffering is proportioned to the delicacy of the chaste mind. Small thanks will he get from the world for this his love of souls. His knowledge of sin will be taken as evidence of the internal profligacy

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of his convent. His assiduous patience in details will be triumphantly quoted in proof of the habitual tone of mind of a celibate priesthood. His work will be perversely appealed to as if it was a collection of recommendations and counsels, a standard of Catholic holy living; just as if a work on the treatment of disease were a picture of the normal health of the population. Men who never pray will republish out of their context passages, every word of which the author probably wrote upon his knees, and then half obliterated with his tears; or with an unsensitive coarseness all their own, will distribute in the vernacular what the author, in some imploring preface, has besought even students not to read, until they are actually called to exercise their awful ministry, and can so depend on the succour of God's present grace. The infidel is horrified; the ultra-protestant delighted; the Anglican protestant thinks he is distressed; and the tract is sold in shops of evil reputation as an incentive and an amusement to the worst passions of mankind. This is his reward from the world. But, meanwhile, his influence has gone forth into the Church; he has taken possession perhaps of thousands of confessionals; his wisdom, and his kindliness, and his persuasion are breathed into the ears of countless penitents in all the quarters of the globe; consciences acknowledge in a happy reformation the empire of his gentleness; and while his name is bandied about as a thing of evil in the hot bluster and on the rabid platform of Exeter Hall, there are redeemed souls around the Throne in

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heaven, whose sins have been washed in the Blood of the Lamb, and whose eternal salvation is owing, under God, to the patient lucubrations of that cloistered priest, supported through all his thankless toil simply by the fervent heat of charity for souls.

Or if we pass onwards to the mystical and female saints, whose supernatural life is one tissue of ecstasies, visions, and unearthly heights of prayer, whose cloistered retirement, ignorance of sin, weakness of sex, and habitual absorption in God, all seem to unfit them for any active interest in the exterior fight which is going on between the Church and the world, how different we find the real case to be! Nowhere is the instinct for souls more keen, more active. Nowhere is the horror of sin, as an offence against the Spouse of souls, more definite or more energetic. Nowhere does God vouchsafe more frequently to communicate His impending judgments on sinners, or to call for penance, suffering, and intercession. Often the interest taken in the external vicissitudes of the Church is the cause of deepest anguish to those chosen and retired souls. It will take hold of them as a lifelong passion, which seems vehement as their very love of Jesus, because it is indeed their very love of Him thus manifested. It will cause them the intensest physical pain, or depths of mental suffering which we may reverently in thought approach to the Agony in the Garden. Blasphemy and Sunday-breaking will be the almost insupportable cross of nuns who from

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girlhood have never been outside the grate. Their spirits will ebb and flow with the dark and bright, the waning and the waxing, of S. Peter's Chair, as it was with S. Catherine of Sienna. Their hearts will faint for the reformation of the clergy, and they will be strangely bold with God about it, as S. Bridget. They will be borne in spirit over tracts of unconverted countries, and become themselves hidden apostles, as we read in the marvellous Life of Sister Mary of Agreda, the authoress of those revelations entitled the Mystical City of God. They will believe, they the most innocent of virgin souls, that the troubles of the world are simply owing to their own sins, and so make themselves holocausts of terrific penance, as did Suor Minima di Gesù Nazzareno, a Carmelite of Vetralla in the diocese of Viterbo, during the troubles of Pius VI. and Pius VII. They will even obtain at last the gift of frequent bilocation, that they may stop sin and warn sinners, as did the illiterate Sor Josepha Maria de Santa Ines, the Augustinianess of Benig-anim, in the diocese of Valencia, whose Life has been written by a father of the Valencia Oratory. But it would be endless to enumerate. There are few things to a student of hagiology more wonderful than the way in which God has been pleased to make His mystical saints, as it were, the sensitive plants of the Church: it is the working of the instinct for souls in its most delicate and supernatural manifestations. When we humbly strive to understand it, forcing ourselves above the level of our dull grossness, then

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it is we get a glimpse into the zeal of the angelic choirs for the honour of the Incarnate Word and for the glory of the Most High, and through that zeal we look with wonder into those more wondrous depths of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, and so deepen our knowledge, and so heighten our worship, and so increase our love, of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the Fountain of the Precious Blood, and the well-head of this mysterious instinct for the souls of men.

The whole devotion to the souls in Purgatory is an illustration of the same thing. In it men contemplate the soul alone, separate from the body, and this familiarizes the mind with interest for the simple soul, which it is otherwise so difficult to realize. The charitable instinct is not satisfied even when death has sealed the gift of final perseverance in a state of grace. It follows the soul into its probable, but uncertain detention from the Beatific Vision. It does penance for it, it makes over indulgences, it endures and offers sufferings, it devotes the intention of the Adorable Sacrifice for its relief. Never anywhere does the love of souls so beautifully combine with hunger and thirst for God's glory as in this devotion for the holy sufferers of Purgatory. The love of souls so touched the Sacred Heart of God made Man, that He shed His Blood to buy them for Himself. Henceforth that love of souls becomes the life of His Church, the motive of His servants, the passion of His saints. The world and the world's ways are revolutionized by its aggressive operations. The soul, what

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is best for it, what is safest, what is highest, this is our standard: all things are referred to it, all things measured by it, all things valued according to it, and that even at the risk of seeming, of seeming, remember, not of being, untruthful, equivocating in word, negligent of promises, careless of vows, disobedient to parents, regardless of others' feelings, narrow of mind, proud of speech, bitter in thought, and intolerant in practice. It is a soul; Jesus died for it; God paid His blood that it might be happy for ever, and that it might be His own. It has been converted; it has fought the fight; it has died in grace; but it may not yet have reached the feet of its beloved Lord, and attained to the kiss of His dear wounds; therefore, Catholic charity has not done with it. Angels laden with the fruits of that unwearied love shall ply incessantly between the land of the living, and the unseen realm of sacred suffering. Not a mass shall be offered but memento shall be made of the departed. Not a canonical hour shall be said, but it shall die away in a whispered prayer for peace for them. Indulgences shall count it their patent of nobility when they are made applicable to the holy souls. Prayers, actions, sufferings, satisfactions, penances, indulgences, freights of these shall be shipped hourly from the harbour of faith for the suffering Church in its atoning fires. Nay, it shall be the one object of life, the peculiar method of sanctification, the single and sufficient heroism, of Sister Francesca of Pampeluna, to be the beads-

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woman of the holy souls; and theologians of Mother Church shall look on approvingly, and give the name of saint beforehand to that worthy daughter of S. Theresa. The Church alone possesses those scales of the sanctuary, wherein a soul can be adequately weighed.

It seems to be quite a characteristic of Catholic charity to be able to unite a keen distress at sin as an offence against an infinitely good God with the absence of all anger and harshness towards the person of the sinner. To aliens the interior distress described by the Saints appears either an unreality of false mysticism or a development of some unscriptural view of reparation and vicarious penance; while the jansenistical sympathies of protestantism find in our affectionate dissembling with sinners, nothing but a fresh proof of modern laxity and Romish corruption. The tone of English society, the judgments passed in conversation, occurrences in family history, and the criticisms of the press, sufficiently show that protestantism is unable to reconcile these two things. It is the exclusive privilege of the Catholic zeal for souls. It is well known what store the Church sets by perfect souls, or such as are aiming at perfection, and exercising virtue in an heroic degree. Our Blessed Lord told S. Theresa that one such was of more value in His sight than hundreds of ordinary catholics who bound their service by the limit of precept only. Yet when we open books of mystical theology, or penetrate to the secret confessional, or convent grate, where a director is guiding some one along the

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awful heights of a supernatural life, and amid the rare and perilous gifts of an unusual grace, we find even there that the safety of the sinful soul, and not the gift of the perfect soul, is the rule by which advice is given and on which conduct is founded. The confessor is warned that if a penitent shall receive from God a revelation as to the state of a sinner's soul, he shall not all at once, even though he may have tried and approved the revelation, warn the sinner of his danger, but lest he frighten and startle him, or sadden and depress him overmuch, he shall pray God Himself to inspire the unhappy person with fitting sentiments of penance in the ordinary way, or shall warn him in a roundabout and unterrifying manner, not letting him know, without absolute necessity, that the darkness of his soul has been a worthy subject for a divine revelation; and this is to be his conduct unless God expressly enjoins the contrary. Still more strikingly and beautifully is this instinct of tenderness for souls shown in the rules for trying revelations, given by the most approved mystical writers. If the person who receives a revelation of the state of a sinner is excited about the offence against God, or vehement, or angry, or speaks harshly of the sinner, or has an outburst of zeal, or an unquiet grief, then the director may conclude that the revelation is from the evil spirit, and not from God. But if the person is not disturbed, feels no contempt, but a value for the soul whose misery is revealed to him, desires ardently his salvation, and grieves only

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with a quiet and sweet grief over the offence of God, (tranquille dolens de divina offensione), these are the signs that it is indeed the Holy Ghost the Paraclete who has spoken in His servants' heart. Follow the Church where you will, this instinct for souls is ever strangely true to itself, working as consistently in the unlikely heights of mystical contemplation, as in the almost professional compassion of the regular mission, the awakening retreat, the Lent discourse, or the city confessional.

But this instinct for souls, which is such a mark of the true Church, is little understood by the world. It is, in mens' esteem, a low view; it is meanspirited in its aims; it is vulgar in its operations; it does not show well by the side of national movements, political schemes, schools of design, or crystal palaces. Nay, when the late pope, Gregory XVI., with tears in his eyes, had affectionately urged upon an Anglican traveller, not to wait till all Anglicans were converted in a body, but simply to "save his own soul," an Oxford friend wrote word that he was ashamed the pope took such "low and shady views," when he ought to have recommended the Anglican, like S. Paul, to be anathema for his brethren! Are there any limits to the grotesqueness of Anglican unreality? However, whatever Oxford and the world may think of this instinct for souls, to the readers of the Lives of Saints, we may fairly presume, that it is a matter of no common interest; and the train of thought which the lives of Father Segneri and Father Pinamonti are

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likely to awaken, will bear dwelling on for a while.

By the mercy of God the Catholic population of England have now not unfrequently the blessing of missions preached among them. Whether it be by the sons of S. Ignatius, or of S. Alphonso, or of the V. Paul of the Cross, matters not; there are doubtless hundreds of souls now in England who have good cause to bless the day when the mission was opened in their town, village, or neighbourhood. "Missions" are one of the features of the Modern Church; and it seems natural at this time that we should try in our little way to help on the cause of the mission-giving Fathers, by selecting for publication such Lives of Saints as will most tend to excite in mens' minds a love and esteem for those holy exercises. But more than this. Whatever the Church does is a stumbling-block to aliens just now. From the unusually irritating effects of recent events and the swelling stream of conversions, whether the Church weeps or pipes, eats or fasts, she is equally a scandal to those without. Catholic Home-Missions have not escaped the lash of modern controversy. They are faulty in principle, or we do not know how to give them, or at any rate these men will show us our mistakes, or they will set us a more genteel pattern, or they will look on and prophesy, would it were less with the look of the wish being father to the thought! that our work will not endure. Meanwhile our adversaries are so sure they are right, that they have only to point out to us our blunders, and we shall forthwith be

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grateful for the well-meant intervention. This, then, also makes it advisable to say something about missions. We can do so much, if nothing more ; we can show our opponents that we have our wits about us, and, however mistakenly, do what we do of set purpose, and with deliberate intention.

Anglican views of Catholic missions and the conversion of sinners enable us more than anything else to measure the distance which English protestantism, from its most urbane to its coarsest modification, has drifted from Catholic truth and practice. Principles come up in the discussion which have to do with the very life and being of the Church: doctrines of sin, and souls, and our own sense of sinfulness, at work with quiet vigour among the people, in strange contrast with the exterior views and inoperative paper-schemes of Anglicans, pleading as they are just now for bare toleration and a less unsparing ridicule from a cruelly unreceptive public of their own communion.

In looking at the Church's work as a soul-saving institution during the last three centuries, we are struck by three remarkable manifestations of her instinct. First of all, there are the Retreats and Spiritual Exercises of S. Ignatius. Never till the day of judgment can it be known what work for the glory of God these holy and temporary retirements have done among religious, ecclesiastics, and seculars. Men rescued from long habits of dominant sin, vocations discovered, lukewarmness converted into fervour, religious noviciates peopled, common priests rising into apostles, great works conceived and the heart found

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to dare and to do them, parishes reformed, colleges reanimated, local society purified again and again, each one of these heads represents uncounted deeds of good accomplished in Ignatian Retreats. Rossignoli's "Wonders of God in the Spiritual Exercises" indicates, rather than exhausts the various triumphs of grace in these sacred retirements.

Then secondly, as well in the way of contrast as of supplement to these occasional and vehement, though not the less enduring, renovations, we have the stable and stationary Exercises of S. Philip Neri, a group of kindly inventions, mental prayer, and long sermons, and weekly disciplines, and pestilential hospitals, oddly blending with musical oratories, blythe pilgrimages to interesting churches, and picnics in the vineyards. The object of these is quiet and gay perseverance in the service of God. Their end is the Christian life of great towns, sought chiefly in the purity of their youthful multitudes. The world is no longer to have a monopoly of its own good things, nor the devil a patent for recreations. And he who takes the trouble to read the "Idea degli Esercizj di San Filippo," may see that these things too have had their triumphs in the cause of God, and, moreover, that increased strictness, nay even perfection in the world, has come of all the seeming laxity of S. Philip's year-long Carnival.*

* The description of the Exercises of the Oratory, best known in England, is probably the one given by Blanco White in his autobiography. But those were not the exercises of S. Philip, but of S. Ignatius. Everywhere the Oratory seems to have occupied

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Thirdly, come the "Missions," the apostolic journeys and apostolic halts of holy men, doing for the masses, whether in town or country, what Retreats have done for particular classes and for the few. Sacrilegious confessions set right, feuds appeased, injuries forgiven, restitutions made, scandals abated, shameful courses abandoned, null marriages validated, infidels and heretics converted, bad catholics restored, good measure pressed down and running over of such excellent fruits, have been the result of these same missions, and it is of them that we propose to say something now. Strange that the perverse appetite of criticism should find matter for reprehension here!

It would be interesting to trace the counterparts of these three things in earlier times. They can hardly be said to be new ideas in the Church; yet they have been so remarkably formalized and reduced into a kind of science in these latter days that they may fairly be quoted as characteristics of the modern Church. Protestant writers have not always been blind to their merits, and earnest

the ground unfortunately left vacant by the expulsion of the Jesuits. It was and is so in Spain; it was so lately, and may yet be so in Mexico. In Florence, four years ago, the Oratorians were nicknamed the "consuls of the Jesuits," and shared with the Padri Missionarii of S. Vincent, the ground from which the children of S. Ignatius had been banished. Thus Father de Vega's exercises at Seville, as well as those in the Cava at Cadiz, which Blanco White describes, were strictly Jesuit. Nothing, of course, *can* supply at all adequately the place of the Society, where its blessed and multifarious labours are prohibited; but to find the children of S. Philip on both sides of the Atlantic doing what they can to stop the gap, is what might be expected from the friendship of the Founders, and from the instinctive sympathy and interchange of good offices between the Company and the Oratory.

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men have wished to copy them, with a frank and unaffected acknowledgment of their many blessings. While Retreats are said to have been attempted by one section of the Anglican party, missions have attracted the notice of a zealous dignitary of the Establishment. Catholic models have been sought for in books, and protestant Banbury has seen, with only half-awakened surprise, (to its own shame be it spoken) a catholic mission attempted by a protestant bishop in its parish church. The spiritual bill of fare put forth on the occasion was a trifle cold, and to the eyes of a catholic priest, oddly selected and more oddly put together: or at least it repudiated that spiritual chronology which we are used to in such matters. It had one merit; there was nothing in it to shock men's reverence for respectability. It lost in heart, however, what it gained in decorum; but it was well meant; and if the protestant prelate failed to rival with his laudable activity the feats of Father Segneri or the Blessed Leonard of Port Maurice, it was his misfortune, rather than his fault. Sober solemnities will sometimes chill, and respectability wax heavy as an oppression. The bishop was without resource; he was their captive and their victim; nay, they made him their exponent for the time. He had no mission, he had no sacraments, the Spirit would not speak by him; what *could* he do? He witnessed, without thinking of it, to the goodness and the power of catholic missions; and we thank him, in no unkindly spirit, for his testimony.

Our English temptation is to look too eagerly

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for material results, to trust in the apostolate of brick and mortar, to riot in the statistics of schools, and to feast on the consecration of new churches. These are indeed most excellent things, and so are new books and new reviews, and successful controversies, and the circulation of tracts by thousands, and getting certain publications upon bookstalls at railway stations, and an increased activity in the catholic body, and better means of catholic organization, and committees to checkmate persecution, and defence societies to watch governments, and so make cowards of evil purposes. They are excellent in themselves, and excellent because they have very much to do with the conversion of sinners, and the salvation of souls, and the spiritual comfort of the poor; neither will the whine or the menace of bully newspapers convince us that we do not know our own business best, or frighten us from the way which for reasons of our own we may choose to take. But our temptation is to make these our whole work, or our chief work, because we want to make a show, to silence objections, and to gain a victory. So it may be in season to say a little about catholic missions, or the Church's dealings with the masses and the poor. Let us but look to souls, and God will defend us. Men cannot put a drag on the wheel of Providence. They fear us because we succeed; and we shall go on succeeding. God will be with us if only we be true to ourselves, and to the souls for whom Jesus shed His precious Blood. There is our strength; God is with us there; He makes us each day to see, to feel, to handle His

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grace; it is almost as much matter of sight as of faith. There is no doubting it. The word hath gone forth bidding the children of Israel that they go forward: nor man, nor power, nor policy, nor school, nor system shall withstand that word. Happy we who live in this our dear native land, when that divine word hath been uttered over her!

A great work is doing now among souls, and it is underground. The noisy surface of the multitudes is not where our diggings are; our California is underneath. Mr. Mayhew tells us in his work upon the London Poor, that thousands of costermongers in that one city profess to have no religion, but that if they took up with any, it would be the catholic, because of the mutual relations of catholic priest and catholic poor. In one most crowded district of central England, a good priest has been at work above a quarter of a century; and out of each score of death-beds he has attended, seventeen have been cases of protestants sending to him in that last extremity, as having no confidence in other ministrations. Hence in the recent uproar of monied men, and the middle classes, and the piqued diplomatists, against papal aggression, those who are emphatically the people could not be moved, and their popular organs took the opposite side. Those who were paid for burning Guys, burnt them: their enthusiasm was a matter of justice, and there it ended. Thus if it be wise and well, as surely it is most lawful, if we choose, to seek political influence, and to make alliance with the people's

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cause, it is by self-denying work for souls that the lower end is to be attained; and it is never to be forgotten that political influence and a favourable public opinion are shelters for weak and less generous, yet blood-bought souls, whom human respect might otherwise destroy. It is a false and heartless spirituality which pretends to ignore the bearing of all these things on the saving of men's souls. As for agitation, it is not our business to speak of it here. Men must either have lost temper or forgotten history, if they are not aware that Catholics, like wasps, are better left alone.

It is not the fashion now-a-days with our protestant critics to look at the Church as a soul-saving institution. Nay, many regard this as her weak point. She has failed, they consider, in raising the moral tone of the countries in which she is dominant; at Naples, Mr. Gladstone will have it,* she descends to be the bully of a bad

* "In the first place, then, we desire to remind our readers that Mr. Gladstone's statements rest almost entirely, not on his own personal knowledge, but on the evidence of others. For the greater part of his story he is a mere collector of evidence; and though his qualifications for this office ought to be unquestionable, yet it is important to bear in mind that the facts he has recorded do not rest upon his veracity, but upon his skill. Every word he says may be true, and the case he makes out may be utterly false and baseless.

"Thus it may be quite true that *he has heard* the expression used that the Neapolitan Administration is "the negation of God erected into a system of 'government;'" or that it is *the general belief* of those to whom he has spoken, that the political prisoners "are between fifteen or twenty and thirty thousand;" or that a sacerdotal "assassin was *said* to receive a pension from Government;" or that he "*was assured*" the soup on which the prisoners are fed is "nauseous;" or that he has "*never heard* charged with error in politics" a man who was put on trial for conspiracy to murder the King; or that it "*was specified to him* that a certain criminal was subjected to

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government, and lends her authority to odious catechisms contrary to the teaching of S. Thomas; her doctrine of the sacraments plays into the hands of formalism, and habitual sinners dare to approach the Precious Blood with as little concern as they go to their daily ablutions; a sense of spiritual

the physical torture of thrusting sharp instruments under his finger nails." It may be perfectly true that Mr. Gladstone heard and was told all these things, and a hundred other things as horrible; but are they true? and what pains did Mr. Gladstone take to arrive at the truth? to sift the stories that were told him? to hear both sides? and to separate truth from falsehood? The reader of his pamphlet naturally imagines that so able and upright a man as Mr. Gladstone has rigorously taken all possible precautions to judge fairly between the Government and its subjects, before taking so decisive a step as that of a semi-official appeal against the Government to the public opinion of Europe. But those who read the Neapolitan reply are compelled to doubt whether this duty has been even tolerably performed. Mr. M'Farlane has been instructed to make the following assertion:—

"'I know what I am stating, and have the amplest authority for it, when I affirm that Mr. Gladstone, before proceeding to Naples, asked for and received letters of introduction to leading members of his Majesty's government, and to other distinguished individuals not appertaining unto the revolutionary or Red Republican party; that, at Naples, his visits were expected by such personages; that he never saw one of them; that he took what he calls 'information' exclusively from a certain party which, ever since the dawn of the revolutionary troubles in the south of Italy, has been most hostile to his Majesty of the Two Sicilies, and his Majesty's government.

"'Had Mr. Gladstone really witnessed the atrocities, the horrors of which he speaks or writes in his letters to your lordship, why did he not visit the King, or his enlightened, humane Prime Minister; the Chevalier Fortunato? or why did he not call upon the Prince of Ischitella, the Minister at War, who, in former years, resided long in England, who is still well remembered and highly respected among the highest and the *best* in this country, and who has the advantage of speaking English fluently and well?"

"Now these assertions go to the foundation of every statement Mr. Gladstone has made. If it be true that in collecting evidence on the facts at issue between the Government and its disaffected subjects, Mr. Gladstone studiously avoided seeking information from one side, and studiously sought it on the other; made it his business to seek out, husband up, and publish all, even the most atrocious and most unsubstantiated rumours current amongst the enemies of the Government, and at the same time carefully turned away his eyes

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uneasiness satisfies itself in the one case very much as a feeling of bodily discomfort from dust and dirt relieves itself in the other. Moreover, the moral theology of modern doctors has bated down no trifling amount of the requirements of sound ethics; and altogether a system has grown up, and the Church has authoritatively accepted it at the hands of S. Alphonso, utterly opposed to the method and sense of early times. This is what men say, and it is hard to persuade them they are not right, so self-evident does it all seem to them. Yet it would not be difficult to show them that the axioms of S. Alphonso, the inferences from which appear so lax, are to be found no less clearly in S. Paul; and if they

and ears from all the counter-evidence that must have been supplied him from the friends and members of the Government: courted the society of those whose cause he upholds, and distinctly rejects at once the society and the information of those against whom he bears witness, and whom he intentionally condemns unheard—if this be so, then indeed Mr. Gladstone's evidence assumes a totally different character from that which we originally attributed to it. Instead of being what it pretends to be—the verdict of an impartial and scrutinising judge, who, after hearing everything in favour of the accused, unwillingly condemns—it turns out to be nothing more than the untrustworthy rhapsody of a man who has *not* sought out the best evidence within his reach, but has made himself a mere echo of the undigested complaints of one party in the dispute."—*Tablet*, *Aug.* 30, 1851. So in the same way we are told in the Times of Sept. 10, that Dr. Wilberforce, the protestaant bishop of Oxford, who is touring in Switzerland, is about to proceed to the Papal States, to collect materials for "a supplement" to Mr. Gladstone's pamphlets. Thus if the Times does not belie him, we have a man who has not yet made his observations, or collected his materials, or balanced his evidence, or heard opposite sides, or done any one thing which was incumbent on him as a Christian man or an honest man in his search after truth, and yet has not only made up his mind which side he shall take, but that his brochure shall be a supplement to a party slander which has taken so well with the protestant public. So much for protestant love of truth! Dr. Wilberforce is welcome to the laurals, which he will doubtless gain.

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were to get together the points which most offend them in the Neapolitan saint, it would startle them to see with what abundance and facility we might garnish their document with references to the epistles of the great Doctor of the Gentiles. His breadth of charity, his unforgetting observation of what men could bear, his allowance for the imperfections of his various classes of converts, his nicely balanced reproofs, his seasonable words of encouragement and praise, his easy condescension so unlike the impulses of such a lion-heart as his,—all these things remind us, as they were themselves the pattern, of the all-embracing charity, the compassionate indulgence, and yet the high-principled and saintly strictness of S. Alphonso; and the first pattern of them both was shown them in the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

So, too, if we have been accustomed to read the fathers, looking at them from an uncatholic point of view, it is astonishing the light which is shed upon them by the study of modern moral theology. Many things which were once a puzzle, and many more which were passed by without any special notice, become clear and significant when once we have mastered the spirit and practice of the modern Church; and just as various sorts of mental prayer, and the technical divisions of meditation and contemplation, come clearly to our view in the early fathers, when read by the light of the controversy which Quietism evoked in the recent times of the Venerable Innocent XI., so does the similarity of the ancient

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and modern ways of the Church in acting upon sinners and corrupt populations come home to us, when we read the history of Tertullian's condemnation, or the sermons of S. Chrysostom, by the light of the modern missions of which the lives of later saints give us such ample records. It is a matter of surprise to find, in spite of Bossuet, that Ezquerra, in his Lucerna Mystica, can quote as witnesses of a Catholic tradition to the orthodoxy of what is now technically called "the prayer of faith, or active contemplation," S. Ignatius the martyr, S. Cyprian, S. Maximus, S. Idacius the Syrian, S. Proculus, S. Basil, S. Hilary, S. John Damascene, S. Athanasius, the two Gregories Nazianzen and Nyssen, S. Jerome, S. Ambrose, S. Augustine, S. Gregory the Great, S. John Chrysostom, S. Cyril of Jerusalem, and S. Cæsarius of Arles. The passages from the fathers cited by Father Segneri in his Concordia tra la Fatica e la Quiete, seem almost to prophecy of modern controversies on prayer; and though Grancolas, in his history of Quietism, acknowledges that we have no instances of formal methods of mental prayer earlier than the eleventh century, (some say, none earlier than S. Bonaventure), yet he quotes passages from Clement of Alexandria, S. Gregory Nazianzen, and S. Gregory the Great, which show us how very closely the spiritual direction and interior life of the early Church followed the approved and sanctioned methods of our own days. It is true that early writers have spoken loosely on doctrines not defined, and so in like manner are there expressions

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in the mystical theology of the Fathers, as also in Ruysbroke and Tauler, which since the heresy of the Molinists the Church has authoritatively proscribed. Yet, besides the condemnation of the previous heresies of the Flagellants, the Beguards, the Palamites, the Petrobusians, and the Vaudois, and before them of the Gnostics, Manichees, and Eunomians, the Church had a more or less complete chain of patristic tradition on which to base her definitions against the sixty-eight propositions of Molinos and Petrucci. And as with dogma and with the interior or mystical life, so in the matter of retreats, missions, and a great variety of spiritual exercises, a careful study of the writings of antiquity will show in what a modern way (as it might be called) the instinct of the Church for souls worked in early ages, and how much that men are apt to think lax, or Jesuitical, or vulgar, or dissenting-like, has its prototype in the ancient doctors whose praise is in all the churches. It would be an interesting subject, to trace out the method of the Church in reclaiming sinners and dealing with sin in early and mediæval times; and we should be tempted to go somewhat into it here, if it were not that the subject is already in the hands of a priest of our Congregation eminently fitted to do it justice and to grapple with its peculiar difficulties.

Let us address ourselves, then, first of all, to answer the simple question, What are missions? S. Charles Borromeo says that a good parish priest should be like a French milliner continually bring-

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ing out new modes, in order to keep up interest and stimulate a languishing taste. This simile throws no little light on the catholic view of the use of excitement in things spiritual, as contrasted with the stagnant monotony and neutral sobriety of some Protestant systems. A good parish priest looks out upon his flock with a holy and humble solicitude; "they have got accustomed to my preaching," he says, "Sunday after Sunday, and feast after feast; some of them may have gone wrong, and may not like to set themselves right with me in confession, as they know me so well; then there are some scandals in the parish, and I cannot put them down without seeming to take a side, and make myself a party man. Poor things! it is long since they have had a mission, and Sarnelli says that parishes should not go longer than five years without one. I will write to the bishop, and ask if I may have one." It is a white day for a bishop when he receives such applications as these; and his leave, and a warm blessing along with it, is despatched without delay. Our good parochus now loses no time; he writes to the Redemptorist Fathers; they accept his invitation; the day is fixed, and the mission is preached. It is, you see, the parochial system calling in the regulars to its aid, and for its complement. It is the point where the one dovetails visibly into the other. The mission consists of a series of preachments, (sermons, says S. Alphonso, they must not be) catechisms, conferences, vocal prayers, processions, public penances, and other spiritual exercises. In the *get up* of these missions, the various reli-

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gious orders and congregations differ one from the other. The Jesuits have a way of their own, and so have the Passionists, and so have the Brothers of the Order of Charity. As to the Redemptorists, their blessed Founder is the very doctor and prophet of missions; he has reduced mission-giving to a regular art, and compiled the most particular rules for each exercise of the mission. We do not know where the minute love, the affectionate wiliness, the simple wisdom, the considerate kindliness, the celestial prudence of Christian charity are to be found more beautifully illustrated than in S. Alphonso's Instructions for the missions, usually published with the Selva Predicabile.

It will not be going out of our way to give some instances of this, not the less edifying because they are amusing also. In the Sentimento di Notte, a short broken discourse in the streets, made on entering the town to open the mission, the preacher is to end with the terrible sentence against sinners, and not to make any act of contrition then, unless inside the church, as the object is to awaken and to terrify, without showing to sinners, who are to be tost awhile on their own stormy feelings, the tranquillity and nearness of the haven. They are in this opening preachment to avoid such addresses as *O wretch! O you baptized Turk! O soul of pitch!* lest the people should be made angry and backened. If there is any scandal which the mission is to put down, the preachment is not to be made near the house where the guilty parties reside, but in another street, (only within hearing, if that

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be possible,) lest it should have the look of personality. During the public discipline the father is to ring a bell in the middle of the Miserere, and expound one of the verses. This gives him time to look about him; if the people show by their faces that they have had enough of self-flagellation, and do not seem to have any great appetite to go on, he is to skip the rest of the psalm, suddenly intone the Gloria Patri, and give out a vernacular hymn to be sung. In the Sentimento di Strascino, while the people are painfully dragging their tongues along the rough church-floor in reparation for their swearing and blasphemy, priests are to be distributed among the rows of the penitents to cheer them on with such words as, "Think, my brother, this tongue might have to burn in hell for ever. Jesus, forgive my bad words. O holy Mary, my Mamma, offer this mortification to God for me. O what a feast this evening's work is for the Angels!" Those whose lot it is to deal with souls, whose vocation it is to be all things to all men, that they may by any means gain some, will enter into the wisdom and charity of these laughable details. They might be multiplied to almost any extent. The instructions are as good as the life of the dear Saint; he is so at home in it all, and writes with an almost humorous gusto, now that he is grown old, and he is lecturing the Giovani of his Congregation as to how they are to do his work for him when he is gone. You cannot really know S. Alphonso till you have studied these Instructions; the stern bishop of S. Agatha, with his su-

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pernatural sufferings, throws into the shade the playful missioner of his early years, so full of genial fun and comic ways, with all his fire of zeal, and depth of prayer, and fast hold of the ceaseless thought of God.

Before S. Alphonso, Filippo de Mura wrote a great book on the art of giving missions, entitled *Il Missionario Istruito,* from which the Saint tells us he borrowed largely. Sarnelli in his Ecclesiastical Letters wrote also dei notabili effetti delle Sante Missioni; and Moroni in his Dictionary quotes him, as saying that one mission does more good in a city than ten courses of Lent sermons; and that although the fruit of missions may not last long, there are nevertheless, several advantages rising out of them, as well for the clergy as for the people. On the 16th of March, 1702, Clement XI. addressed a circular to the bishops, urging them to supply their people with missions, and dwelling on four especial benefits which he thought would come of them, the freer reprehension of abuses, the abundance of preaching, (as he says the word of God is not preached with that plainness which is befitting,) the amelioration of morals, and the patience with which the people are helped through general confessions.

Many congregations have been founded in the Church for the express purpose of giving missions; such, for example, are the congregations of the Missions of the Pii Operai, of the most Holy Sacrament, of the Odonisti, and many others. The custom appears to have begun formally in the city of Rome itself. The popes had them in years

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of Jubilee. Benedict XIV. and Leo XII. assisted in person at them. The Missione Urbana was instituted by the Jesuits in 1610, and perfected by Father Caravita, for preaching in the streets on feasts. Father Memmoni, the Jesuit, in his historical notices of the Oratory of the General Communion, tells us that the confraternity of the Apostles in that oratory is composed of artists, who help in the missions. The mission of our Lady of Succour was founded for the poor of the Roman Campagna by Ottavio Sacco, a Calabrian noble, in 1638, in the Church of San Tommaso in Parione, and raised into an archconfraternity by Urban VIII., as may be seen in Piazza's Opere Pie (ap Moroni). In 1711 Father Giacomo Filippo Merlini di Visso, a Jesuit, started a mission for the mowers and reapers, preaching to them in the middle* of the day when the gangs rested; and another set of missions for the cabmen, which took place in the dusk of the evening, with the singing of vernacular hymns by the two confraternities of the Angels and Apostles, members of Father Caravita's oratory. Later on Father Giovan Maria Ratti, also a Jesuit, founded the Sacred Alliance of the Lovers of Jesus Crucified, to promote the work of missions in the city. In

* In the year 1844 a zealous Anglican minister tried to get up a mission to preach to the resting gangs of labourers on a * * * shire railway; but it came to nothing, in consequence of the bishop's saying he would sanction it secretly, but would not give his name, and so leaving the ardent clergyman to take upon himself, (and he was young,) the odious task of bearding in their parochial rights, sundry foxhunting rectors whose zeal kept humble pace with their discretion, and would by no means have approved of the apostolic Cantab's al fresco sermons in the muddy cutting or at the tunnel shaft.

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1760 the Marchese Imperiali Lercari, a Genoese, founded the mission of our Lady of Graces. His congregation of secular priests still exists in his palace near Santa Maria Maggiore in Rome. During one part of the year they preach missions in the dioceses of the Pontifical States, and during the rest of the year they give retreats, hear confessions, and visit the hospitals in the city. To this house Leo XII. aggregated the pious work of the nocturnal oratories, instituted by Cardinal Antonelli, and that of the spiritual exercises of boys for their first communion, founded in the Roman College by Cardinal Vitaliano Borromeo.

As the present Pope has been pleased to set up the Confraternity of the Precious Blood in the Church of the London Oratory, and to enrich it with very great indulgences by a rescript of the 12th of August, 1850, we cannot pass over without some mention the Congregation of the Missionaries of the Most Precious Blood, whose indulgences have been communicated to the London Confraternity. A confraternity of the Precious Blood was erected in Rome in the pontificate of Gregory XIII., and was confirmed by Sixtus V. It was afterwards united to the confraternity of the Gonfalone, and the brothers of it who were priests were bound to give missions. It died away from lack of subjects. In the time of Pius VII. an archconfraternity of the Most Precious Blood was set up at Rome in the Church of S. Nicola in Carcere by Albertini, Bishop of Terracina, Bonanni, Bishop of Norcia, and Gaspare del Bufalo,

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Canon of San Marco, an excellent preacher, and considered the chief founder of the Congregation, of which he lived to see thirteen houses. The priests of the Congregation are free to live in the bosom of their own families, under an obligation to give missions whenever they are summoned, and wherever their superiors may indicate. They may also live in communities, but it is essential that they should not bind themselves by vows. Gaspare del Bufalo died in the odour of sanctity at Rome on the 28th of December, 1837; and in a sketch of his life given in the Diario di Roma he is called the institutor of certain sisters of charity, of the daughters of Mary, of certain spiritual exercises for ecclesiastics and seculars, of community-houses for clerks, of instructions of boys for first communion, and of some nocturnal oratories, and the great propagator of the devotion to S. Francis Xavier, whom he had chosen as his protector and model.

The French Church, which has never done anything by halves, and seems to inherit excellence by some indefeasible hereditary right, has successfully rivalled Italy in the work of the missions. The revival of the ecclesiastical spirit by S. Vincent of Paul found its first vent in the work of missions. The labours of cardinal de Berulle and his Oratory of Jesus were directed in great measure to the same end. The missions of M. Olier, the founder of S. Sulpice, form not the least supernatural part of his most interesting and edifying life; and the toils of the Jesuit S. John Francis Regis, in the provinces which lie off the Rhone,

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will bear a strict comparison with the incessant conquests of Segneri and Pinamonti beyond the Alps. The Blessed Leonard of Port Maurice, S. Alphonso, and the Venerable Paul of the Cross have numerous equals and imitators in the great French missioners. Soon after the time of S. Vincent of Paul, there were something like two score of approved ecclesiastical congregations in France whose most prominent work was the giving of missions. The names of Yvan, Eudes, Bourdoise, de La Colombiere, Grignon De Montfort, De Cheverus, Maunoir, and Nobletz, were distinguished in their day, and are still precious in catholic remembrance. Boudon too, the saintly archdeacon of Evreux, relieved his supernatural silence under awful and groundless calumnies by the holy work of far-off missions, far-off, for he like his Lord was no prophet in his own country. Men and congregations might be mentioned to show that the French Church of our own day is rich as ever in the glorious exuberance of her missionary spirit; the Paris Jesuits, Ravignan with his apostolate of fashionable life, a patient work of many disappointments but of fruits incalculable, Mellério, with his happy flock of blouses, in the dim crypt of S. Sulpice which he knows how to fill with the sunshine of his own gay sweet spirit, the Abbé Jammes brooding over his seventy thousand Chinese babes, or more, to whom his far-reaching zeal has taken the waters of Christian baptism, the great names of Ferdinand Donnet, archbishop of Bourdeaux, and of the present bishop of Nevers of missionary renown, the congregations of the

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Sulpicians, the Maristes, and the Conceptionists, the attractive gentle-mannered enthusiasm which rules every feature and prompts every word at the Missions Etrangères, to say nothing of the great work of the Propagation at Lyons, are but some among many glories of the modern Church of France and the energetic life of its heroic clergy.

Very many of the French dioceses possess communities of their own, brotherhoods of apostolical missonaries, seculars under the obedience of the ordinaries, but living more or less in community, and according to a rule; and who by their zeal and energy, and their manifold objects, are as it were so many fresh eyes and hands to their bishop. Several of these congregations enjoy a reputation in the Church far beyond the limits of the diocese whose name they bear: and it will not be invidious to name one of them, affectionately distinguished in our esteem, since for our sakes they have left fair, we might now almost say, believing France, and brought the sweetness of their zeal and the winningness of their quiet toil, no less than the hidden strength of their humble lives and the precious example of their ecclesiastical spirit, to our less happy land. We speak of the Péres Missionaires du diocése de Bayeux, fresh conquerors from Normandy, of a gentler sort and for a greater end, guiding the good mothers of the Délivrande in their great and interesting work at Norwood, one of the most touching features of the Catholic renovation amongst us.

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He who would go and spend a holy-day with the orphans there, and feed his heart and eyes with the happy faces of the little ones, with the gentle cheerfulness and dignified humility of the mothers, and with the amiable wisdom of the affectionate ecclesiastics, would spend a more delightful and a more truly Catholic day than perhaps he has heretofore deemed possible in England. These fathers of the Bayeux Congregation form part of that circle of religious communities, with which the wise and untiring solicitude of the Cardinal Archbishop of Westminister has in the last few years encompassed the metropolis. May the proud hearts of our dear countrymen fall like the walls of the beleaguered Jericho before the trumpets of the word of God, which these various Orders have been taught from on high to sound so boldly and so prudently; may the Péres de Bayeux have full share in the glory, as they will assuredly in the rough toil of this tremendous siege; and may it please the Bishop and Shepherd of souls that *he* may live to witness the hour of victory, whose full and specially loving heart would be most of all gladdened by the joyous sight, He the Prince of the Church, whose zeal planted the besiegers there, and whose kindness has been their protection and their courage in the day of hidden labours and of small beginnings.

We cannot leave this subject without noticing two objections which are often brought against missions, especially by writers not catholic. In a book of religious travels, which made considerable

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noise some time ago, the able writer,* while paying a just and generous tribute to catholic spiritual exercises, objected that they were after all but excitements, and so transient in their effects. The writer is now himself a catholic, and adorns the Church with the many virtues which daily edify those who have the privilege of his friendship. He therefore needs no answer; but his objection does. In truth, it expresses a difference between catholicism and protestantism, which goes very deep. Protestantism would fain educate the masses, give a tone to society, moralize multitudes, or veil their immoralities. It is not with sin as sin, or with souls as souls, that it deals; whereas this is just the work of the Church. Get a man out of his sins anyhow, whether it is by making him laugh, or by making him cry. "Anyhow!" cries the objector; "then it *is* true that you are reckless as to the character of the means you use! *Anyhow!* The means sanctifies the end! This sounds very immoral." "Not so fast, kind objector! not so fast! 'Get a man out of his sins,' this is what we say; and 'anyhow;' but to make a man commit fresh sins in addition to his old ones, would not be getting a man out of his sins, would it? Not so fast then: where is the immorality? we will stick to our 'anyhow.'" Get him out of his sins, get him under the drip of the Precious Blood, get him to confession, to forgive his enemies, to restore ill-gotten goods, to separate himself from proximate occasions of sin, and to

* Mr. Allies.

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see that God is One whom it is worth trying to love, or desirable to fear. "But it will not last." You cannot tell, you cannot predicate it of this case, or of that. You must do what you can, and leave the rest to God. It is a good work, up to this point, and as far as it goes. If the man does fall away, he is more likely to return, because of what you have done for him now; anyhow, he is more likely to make his peace with God when he is dying, and to know how to do so; and if the worst comes to the worst, the few stripes are better than the many. Besides there is God's glory; one sin stopped, one scandal abated, one application of the Precious Blood, even if it were but for a day one such work is worth a hundred missions. This is the Church's instinct for souls; but you cannot make it recommend itself to those who have not got it. "The lover's eye, the lover's ear," of which Scott's ballad speaks, these, for the glory of God, for the honour of Jesus, for the relief of souls, are instincts which belong to the Church alone. Their delicacy seems fancy, their strength fanaticism, their keenness mawkish sentimentality, and their manifestations, not the condescensions of an angel, nor the abasements of the Word-made-flesh, but mere uncaptivating exhibitions of a popularity-hunting vulgarity. When Paley was asked why he did not answer Gibbon, he replied, You cannot refute a sneer. It is a shame to quote a poet memoriter, but Tennyson talks somewhere of people who walk on silk as if the wind blew their own praises in their eyes. Such are some

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of our recent Anglican critics. It is not their arguments; it is their temper which is unanswerable; they will one day see themselves, as others have done already, that so it was.

In the same way, but in a very different spirit from Mr. Allies, in a pamphlet of bitterest virulence, published some months ago, made up chiefly of the usual protestant travellers' stories, we find in certain letters, amid a long, and in some respects, from the misunderstanding of catholic practices, an absurd account of a mission, such expressions as the following. "One cannot but rejoice at such a result as has been brought about; yet I doubt of its durable effects." p. 18. Again in the same page, "I told you that in one Church a thousand people confessed in one day......The Capuchins...have done their duty, and done it well, but when they are gone, and the people are left to the despised ministrations (apparently, as no facts are adduced, a mere spiteful insinuation) of the ordinary confessors, there is much danger that the majority will fall back again." Again, p. 35, the author, who seems very much out of humour with something or somebody, or everything and everybody, comments on his correspondent's letters thus: "A revival of this kind partakes more of the nature of a fever-fit than of vigorous life. It makes the stagnant blood flow, and so far in itself it is a great good; but it implies antecedents, and suggests consequents of a wholly contrary character. It implies past deadness, and suggests future fallings back, when the impression made on the feelings by fervid elo-

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quence shall have abated." Poor souls! they have made an effort to get out of sin, why grudge its partial success, or sneer at its probable short duration? Has it come to this that it shall be a fatal objection to the Church of Him who came to seek and to save what was lost, and who, by a sort of exaggeration, vouchsafed to say that He came not to call the just, but sinners to penance, and bade Peter, the key-bearer, to forgive up to seventy-times-seven, shall it, we repeat, be a fatal objection to the Church that the "antecedents" of her children have been sins, and that their "consequents" *may* be relapses? What means this, if it be not a taking scandal because Jesus eats with publicans and sinners, and lets a poor Magdalen wash His feet with her tears, though she be not yet beyond the possibility of fall?

Having had occasion to refer to this pamphlet, which is simply a libel on the Spanish Church, we have to regret for his own sake that the author has for the most part withheld the names of the localities of which he speaks. Reasons may have made this unavoidable, such as that the writers may have met with personal kindness from those they are finding fault with; but we regret it as we have heard a gentleman of great piety, and of whose veracity and means of information, as a Spanish catholic, we are quite confident, throw a grave slur on the author's facts, from his own personal knowledge: in one case too of a city in which he was but some few weeks after the writer of certain of those letters had quitted it. To most catholics,

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as is usually the case with the accounts of protestant travellers, the pamphlet tolerably well refutes itself from internal evidence of misunderstanding, and of counter-statement which the author hardly perceives to be such. The writer was amazed at the ludicrous misconception of the religion of the English implied by the Neapolitans' saying they were "infidels," because they were "English and Protestant;" yet some eight millions of the author's fellow-subjects would think with us that the good Neapolitans were talking very sound theology. The devout old woman at Rome, who horrifies him by compassionating the "poveri Inglesi" for their rose-water baptisms, is another instance of the keen feeling a catholic has about souls; an Anglican old woman would have felt no compassion for the Neapolitans if she had been told that they were baptized with rosolio, or that they did not believe in baptism at all, but in "Mahound or Termagaunt." As to the *substance* of her facts, the Roman old lady has the English Churchman on her side, which, in a series of well-remembered suicidal articles made out a sadly probable case against the baptisms of the bulk of the Anglican population, and, if our memories have not failed us, rose-water held a distinguished place in the poor Journal's quaint lamentations. For this and for other reasons, we wonder the author should put forth baptism as a strong point of his protestant Establishment, and be horrified that an old woman at Rome misconceived of Anglican baptism, when he Privy Council and a divided Bench of Bishops,

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the mettlesome suffragan no less than his excommunicated primate, found in it to say the least as much difficulty as the poverina vecchia did, and have managed to leave a great deal more! Again he says in a note p. 40, "The men in Italy do not pray:" we have probably been as much in Italy as this writer, yet how can we answer such an assertion save by saying, It is shamefully untrue. What the writer says of Mr. Allies's book is rather a description of his own; it is eminently "one-sided and untrustworthy." If truth is not to be found in such quarters as these, where it once reigned glorious and supreme, in very deed we may abandon controversy. We say, Truth, for alas! generosity we had been already taught was to be our inheritance no more; but we did look for truth at least, not from the world's lips, but from those and such as those whom we are quoting. Once more, as a specimen of the hopelessness of controversy on theological principles, with the peculiar school this pamphlet represents, what will the catholic reader think of Father Newman's subscribing himself to his correspondent, "Yours in S. Mary and S. Philip," being considered as a proof of—"excess of adoration!" In this way of interpretation, as Bishop Butler says, anything can be made of anything. The writer is not more fortunate or more accurate when in the same page he quotes a tolerably literal translation of the verses of good old Father Muzzarelli, who sang them in his Mese di Maria in 1788, i. e. sixty-three years ago, and who died in 1813, i. e. has been quietly in his grave these thirty-eight years, as an

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illustration of the length to which "adoration" of our Blessed Lady "has been carried by the new school of Oratorians!" We call to mind the words of Thomas à Kempis, O quam bonum et pacificum de aliis silere, nec indifferenter omnia credere, neque de facili ulterius effari. The author writes throughout as if he understood our affairs far better than we understand them ourselves: you cannot reach a disposition of that kind.*

The enemies of the Church think it quite an unanswerable argument against our missions and spiritual exercises to say, "O, the priests care for nothing but to get a man to confession; they think that is beginning, middle, and end of the whole business." Now of course Catholics know well enough that this is simply a falsehood, and that the very greatest pains are taken, and with success, to teach the opposite. But the Protestant principle is "No faith with Papists;" and a lie is not a lie when it is told against the Catholic Church, because there is such an overwhelming à priori probability in the Anglican mind, that all bad things *must* be true of Rome. Nay, so little chance have we of fair play just now, that we are pretty much in the condition of the old bishop in Hallam, who complained that he could not get a verdict from a London jury, for that they

* We have purposely left the title of the pamphlet and the name of its author unmentioned. We are simply illustrating our own doctrine, not writing a professed answer to a pamphlet put forth evidently under excitement; and as it was not necessary, we were loath to print the name of a person so worthy of esteem, in connection with views from which he will one day be delivered, and statements which he will live to wish otherwise.

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"so hated the Church that they would bring in Abel guilty of Cain's murder." But have these men ever considered how much is involved in this confession of which they speak with such unworthy levity? Have they weighed the humiliation, the sorrow for past sin, the hatred of it, the determination, honest at the time, to avoid sin in future, the actual separation from proximate occasions of sin, the inconvenient restitution of what has been wrongly acquired yet long possessed, the reconciliation of enemies, the grace-given fear of an unseen world and its revealed punishments, the trembling desire for absolution, which has, literally, no mere natural motive to rest upon? Have they realized that each separate one of these nine things is supernatural, each the work of actual grace, each a token of the operation of the Blessed Paraclete, each a sample of the adorable treasures of an illimitable compassion, each a gift, more precious than all the empires of the world, from the Eternal Creator to His revolted creature? Have they considered that, whether persevered in or not, these things do for the time restore a person to the favour of God, that He accepts what these men scorn, that His actual foreknowledge of relapses hinders not His acceptance of the present, and that, as the sinner is in His sight, the difference between his former and his present state is no less a difference than that between heaven and hell? Have they reflected on the miracle of divine love and the mysterious process which is involved in each separate application of the Precious Blood, whether they tie,

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as protestants do, that application to the faith and ordinary sorrow of the sinner by themselves, or to those qualities in union with sacramental absolution or at least implying its desire? Have the angels joyed over the present penance of the returning sinner, while these writers are taking *views*, and shaking their heads, and saying it will not last? It is not a very deep theology which finds a satisfactory rationale for all these things in the profound remark that "the Spaniards are such a very excitable people;" and the Christ-like love of souls must be a sense unknown to him who, while an act is going on which does no less a thing than change a man's state in the sight of God, and over which angelic hierarchies are positively rejoicing, can with mock compassion regret that these confessions were "made not deliberately and after careful preparation, but in the stormy excitement produced by the great eloquence of the preachers, and the prospect of Plenary Indulgences," and mourn, it must be said, as a Pharisee might mourn, over that lack of "more attention, more individual attention," with which, if the Catholic Church would take the writer's advice, the confessions would have been made. The poor Spanish penitents, however, have S. Ambrose on their side, with his well-known axiom, Nescit tarda molimina Spiritus Sancti gratia. O words are weak to convey the Catholic feeling of the unkindliness, the unloveliness, of this! Yet, reader, it is not from the writer's heart; no, like the helpless intoxicated oracle of the Greeks, he speaks only what the fumes

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of his system inspire into him. He is doubtless a thousand times better and more true a man than you would take him for, if you have never had the ill luck to stand where he is now; and if you have so stood, then you will forget to judge him, because of the quick impulse of gratitude, which will carry you away, and whose voice will be, Thanks be to God! the snare is broken, and we are delivered. Laqueus contritus est, et nos liberati sumus.

But what does all this show, except that protestantism has no eye for the supernatural, and cannot see the things of faith which require a spiritual discernment? We have heard that one of the most experienced missioners in England said that his great difficulty with Anglicans, (Anglicans, remember, not Evangelicals) was to get into their heads the idea of grace; they could not compass it; it was beyond them; for a moment they seemed to master it; then it was gone again, as if a Pelagian habit of mind were burned into them. This comes out most clearly in the objection to Catholic missions, which we have been considering. Of course we by no means admit the facts of our adversaries about the little amount of persevering good effected by the missions. We know more about it than they do. We have the testimony of many Saints and holy missioners who tell us how, years after, they visited spots where F. Segneri, or the B. Leonard, or S. Alphonso, or the Ven. Paul of the Cross, or S. Francis Jerome, or S. John Francis Regis, or M. Olier, gave missions, and they have

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found the work still enduring, having given birth, let us once more remind our readers, during the course of years to innumerable acts, supernatural and grateful to God, because elicited by the power of grace, which is His gift. Thus we read in the Life of Father Pinamonti: "The abundance was not the only good property of the harvest; it was, in addition, lasting and efficacious; so that when Father Peter, many years after, returned to hear confessions in districts where missions had been given, he met with numbers of persons, who, having been previously addicted to great crimes, had, during all that time, entirely refrained from them. Some souls were found exalted to a high degree of perfection."

What an event it is for one man to die in a state of grace, whose eternity, but for a mission, would have been sealed in a different manner! And yet it would be no extravagant stretch of the imagination, to suppose that there is an average of at least one such event to every mission in the world. These men speak of the movements of grace, as if they were natural impressions. Now impressions which are simply moral, have their own laws of duration; those which are the result of tried convictions are not as those which are made in the fervour of an excitement. Thus when such writers speak of conversions as not being worth much, *because* they were made in the fervour of excitement, they are confounding the supernatural operations of grace with the laws of mere natural impressions, as if what was true of these last was the whole account

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of the first. If the conversions in question were the work only of natural impressions, we grant the proposition of our opponents; if they were the work of supernatural grace co-operating with those impressions, we deny our opponents' inference, because we do not grant parity between the laws of nature and the laws of grace. As to mere impressions, given the natural character of the person impressed, we can calculate tolerably well their success, its extent, and its duration. Such impressions do not alter a man; they are simply natural; at most the first links in a chain which shall end in some amount of ethical reform, not unassisted by the motions of actual grace. The writers to whom we are alluding have no notion beyond this. They wield no mightier weapons themselves. They have not taken in the idea of grace, for they are not under the habitual ministration of it by the Church of God; they know nothing of its secrets, and are without the capability of appreciating its wonders. What might be even an undue confidence in the impressions produced by Dr. Wilberforce's protestant preachers at Banbury in favour of moral virtue, would fall very far short of the trust which might be put in the grace given at Malaga to produce contrition.

Then, again, those who cannot appreciate grace are as little able to appreciate sin. Sin is a disease of the soul, on which depends a man's relation to God, and his eternity of weal or woe. Let us look at the way in which men treat diseases of the body. A person is at an advanced period of life, or has an ailing constitution; he

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contracts some disease; do physicians neglect it, because they say it may become chronic, and then that it cannot be expelled from the constitution? drive it out, and it will return, therefore we will let it alone! Is this a chain of reasoning which would recommend itself to the desires of the patient or to the sympathies of his relations? Is there to be no effort? Or is alleviation nothing? Why then leave a man with one mortal sin upon his conscience, because there is a probability he may some time commit another? Who does not know the spreading and corroding mischief of an unconfessed sin? Why should the rust be let to eat away even the hope of recovery, because perchance the clean spirit may gather rust again? Why not let the sinner make friends with God now, simply because there is a possibility, nay, if your ill nature will have it so, a likelihood, of his offending Him again hereafter? Medicine and food are not taken once for all; so neither are spiritual remedies, or spiritual sustenances. The Eucharist, no less than Penance, is not a sacrament which it is unlawful to reiterate. Because we cannot do all we could wish, are we not to do all we can? O, and may we not trust something, be it ever so little, to the abounding mercy and untiring patience of God, whom we have tried so much, and proved so thoroughly? Is it always fanaticism to look above ourselves, and to hope for that which is higher and better than our nature, nay, which is impossible to it alone? Is there not such a gift of the Holy Ghost as force? And may it not many times come

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with those "all things" of the apostle, which He will freely give who began by giving us His Son? Why, if it were not that all things are lawful, all things logical, when men are cavilling at the Church, such inconsequence would not be tolerated.

We acknowledge that the fight of the Church against sin and satan is up-hill work, full of disappointments and temporary defeats. Our Blessed Lord told us to expect it would be so. Sufficient for the day is its evil; we must work while we can, and as we can; we must do our best, not sit by the wayside idle, wringing our hands in inefficacious woe because we cannot turn our villages and towns into nothing short of a Jesuit Paraguay, or the old California of Franciscan times. Soul-saving and satan-fighting will not let us always keep to our proprieties. We must snatch, though it would be politer to take, when what we snatch is a brand from the burning. We must steal, when it would be more decorous to sue by process, when what we steal is a silly soul lingering in the proximate outskirts of a sin. To run is less dignified than to walk, yet we will run, aye, scamper, when what we are scampering after is a soul that satan is running away with between his teeth. There is honour among thieves, an understanding among diplomatists, a law between belligerents; but there is no tie, no rule, no claim, between satan and the missioner; all is fair on one side, because all is foul on the other It is simply a war, internecine, exterminating,

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à outrance. Yet these quiet spectators desiderate more gracefulness, more calmness, more measured ways, more refined means, and not all this untutored unecclesiological snapdragon for souls, as it looks to them. They are scandalized because our priestly attire is rumpled and discoloured with the blood and smoke of the hot battle; as if we, like them, could, with our work indeed, be presentable at any moment in the most approved circles with a smooth unruffled surplice and a carefully suspended master's hood. A good thorough-going missioner, with his heart in the business, playing double or quits with the devil, is not perhaps the most tastefully draped or classically postured figure that might be. But we are not slow either to learn or to copy; let protestantism, with its keen insight into human nature and its wiser wisdom, show us a more excellent way, and we will follow it. The Establishment is not satisfied with what we have done for Naples; does it in sober earnest wish us to copy what it has done for Birmingham? We confess, with all the readiness in the world, that we are *not* doing what we would, but only what we can.

Once more:—Is not every unforgiven sin a kind of stain upon the accidental glory of God, and an offence before Him? Is it then nothing that these should be obliterated for ever by the Precious Blood of Jesus Christ Crucified? Do these writers believe that sins forgiven and absolved revive again, with relapses into sin? Have they any theology whatever upon the point, or have

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they committed themselves to a view? Have they ever reflected seriously upon the matter at all? Has it not ever struck them that it is always the lover's way to remove out of sight whatever pains and offends the loved one? And this is what the Catholic missionary is daily doing. Herein is his practice of the love of God. And if there is a chance, let it be fainter than the faintest chance our enemies allow, that a poor penitent will persevere, and so will not be damned, the Friar will give his exciting mission and receive the sinner's excited confession; nay, absolve him in the very bewilderment and "fever-fit" of shame, and tears, and sighs, and sobs, and if so be, of "the howls," which offend the traveller's propriety so much; and herein is our missioner's practice of the love of his neighbour. He has no *views;* he would probably be puzzled if they were put before him; but his heart is under the empire of grace, and woe is unto him if he preach not the gospel: and whether souls are saved quite en règle or not matters little to him, and whether love for the weeping sobbing sinner whom the Good Shepherd has brought to his feet, has made him calculate a little too favourably the chances of perseverance, matters to him still less; while the caustic traveller has his view, the unviewy Friar can only say of his penitent, with a provoking obtuse simplicity, that whereas this man was blind, now he sees.

Ah! what a different view of zeal for the glory of God, and of the intense hatefulness of a single sin, is presented to us in the practice of

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S. Ignatius. Speaking of his efforts for the conversion of women of scandalous life, his biographer says, (Life ii. 106) "Such was the pity of the Saint for these poor stray sheep, that even when he was general of the order, and weak from age and infirmities, he used to go himself and draw them away from houses of ill-fame, and he might be seen bringing them through the midst of Rome either to the house of S. Martha, or to the house of some pious and noble lady.........Sometimes the Saint was told that he lost his time and labour in endeavouring to reclaim these women, who, from the force of old habits, would return to their vices to-morrow though they forsook them to-day; but he replied, 'If with all my labour in this matter, I had only prevented one of these poor creatures from offending God on one single night, I should consider that all my labours were well employed.'" How little of the utilitarian is there here! The whole difference between truth and falsehood, catholicism and protestantism, lies in those simple, but weighty words. Would that our new critics of the Church would deign to meditate upon them, and apply their hearts, and know wisdom, and see the end of these things! He that would be a healer of the churches must have another temper than the one displayed in such disrespectful ebullitions, less self-satisfied, less pungent, less frivolous, less little.

We do not use the words in anger. Men are worth strong words, when they are worth persuading. Yet here again, as so many times before, the painful thought is forced upon us, how hard it is

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to persuade men when you cannot disabuse them of their à priori prejudice. These men love an abstraction which they call the Church, no men more loyally, no men less self-seekingly. To be of their mind in their communion is equivalent to the vow which prohibits certain religious from accepting dignities. They have no comfort at home, while they are throwing stones at the catholic passers-by. They are, we know it, for they publish it, positively miserable; and they bear their misery almost too patiently for their soul's good. They have, too, a certain perception of the majesty of the Church. So long as you keep to the beauty of the papal theory, or the function of the Church as a civilizer, or her fecundity in schools of theology, or her empire in art, or her benignant influence over political commotions, though they may join issue with you on the question of degree, yet they will concede more than you were sanguine enough to expect, though less than you had the right to claim. But when you come to soul-saving, to the interior life of the church, to the actual working of sacrament and rite, to questions of grace, sin, contrition, and the delicate handling of invalid souls, at once they are out of their depth. They have nothing like it: they are without standards, without instruments; it is beyond them. They guess, they take shots; they trust their imaginations, they fancy a premiss, and are willing to die for the conclusion, and when at a loss will even divine against the Church with pagan divinations. And so it is with this whole matter of God's glory, and the hatefulness of a single sin,

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and the non-revival of an absolved sin, and the very fever of love which, acting like a law, forces the servants of God to go about the world simply obliterating sins for the glory of their Lord. Our critics cannot understand it. What can be more unreal, more childish? What can more plainly exemplify an unworthy view of God, or the fact that the poor Church of Rome hath still the letter that kills, while the spirit which makes alive has evaporated from her? So they reason. Little do they know how dear to the Church is the glory God condescends to gather from His creatures. There is not a vessel that she uses, whether it be for the pulpit or the confessional, for the mission or the retreat, into which she does not pour all that it will hold of this living life of hers.

They little know, how can they? how Catholics grow into the thought of God, and how the presence of God grows into them, making their many hearts more and more perfectly His own. They whose blood is not on fire deem that lovers rave; and as their mood may be, they can smile with pleasant sympathy, or be vexed because they cannot sympathize, or employ themselves in a cool analysis of love's romance, and blunder because they do not understand. So it is with the Church and her critics. She, for love of God and love of souls, is practical to a degree which is romantic; for she is one while beside herself with sorrow, and another while beside herself with joy, and all whiles forgetful of every witness but the Spouse's Eye, acknowledging no standard but His praise, careless of every law but the beatings of His Human Heart;

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and in all this what does she testify but the intensity of her sacred passion? Call her not lightly to account. When on her bed of prayer and deepest contemplation she finds not Him whom her soul loveth, and when, therefore, she rises and goes about the city in the streets and in the broad ways to her missions, if you meet her she will but say, as to the watchmen of the city who found her, "Saw ye Him whom my soul loveth?" Be not scandalized because she is a wanderer at such a season and in such a place; or because her lips part, like Anna's when Eli judged her so unjustly, and she babbles of pomegranates and cyprus, spikenard and saffron, sweet cane, and cinnamon, myrrh and aloes, with all chief perfumes; or because she startles you with such bold words, "I have drunk my wine with my milk; eat, O friends, and drink, and be inebriated, my dearly beloved." Do not to her as those watchmen did, who smote and wounded her, or as those keepers of the walls who took away with rude immodesty her veil from her, and she the while still bade them tell her Beloved she was sick of love. Be respectful; reverence is its own reward; take care lest she be, as indeed she is, the Spouse of Christ, and you do despite unto her. She is sick of love; it is not a scandal; it is a mystery. Tread lightly and speak softly, for "the King is bound in her galleries;" and you may one day find Him there, and then your heart will ache over every long-past word that fell from you, the least short of what was due to her. May the fertility of her intercessions and the potency of her Sacrifices so deal

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on your behalf, as that you may never have a less blessed ache than this!

But to return. Is this more severe than true? bear with its being put plainly, not unkindly; plainly, as it seems to Catholics. For if there be no sense of grace, and no sense of sin, how shall we look for the humbling and subduing sense of being oneself a sinner? What a tale this class of pamphlets tells, not so much against their individual authors, who write far below their own tone of mind and abound in what is good and generous, (it is a pleasure to repeat this assurance) but against the system of peevish unreality in which they are so helplessly engulfed! Alas! all this philosophizing upon the emotions of broken and contrite hearts, all these unfeeling criticisms upon the shame-stricken excitement of general confessions, these hard calculations as to whether it would not be more reverent to leave poor men in a state of damnation, because there is ten to one against their perseverance, this snappish petulance of illtempered proprieties because the adulterer's or the murderer's sigh has broken out into a vulgar sob, and his sob, spite of of the reverence due, as we are specially reminded, to a consecrated building, into a "howl" of agony, these sneering insinuations as to the greater motive power of a Plenary Indulgence than of the love and fear of God, this sarcastic eagerness to bate down to the lowest good which can not be denied, these cold theories of the improper relations between "fervid sermons" and general confessions, this intolerant sentimentality because foreign sin-

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ners will not mourn according to the tasteful moderation of Anglican æsthetics, how little do they testify of blessed self-abasement before God, of consciousness of grievous sin and shameful want of perseverance in ourselves, of the charity that hopes all things and believes all things, of habits of self-examination, confession and penance, nay, or even of the not very heroic honesty which slowly retired from the Saviour's presence for lack of boldness to throw the first stone at the self-convicted sinner.

Rather than that there should be one rival brightness to obscure the certain fact that the Anglican Establishment is the "special depositary of God's truth," there is an ill-conceived pleasure in the hasty and unproved and contradicted assumption that the ordinary ministrations of the Spanish priests are despised, then a teased and vexed perception that there is life and power in the Capuchins, then on reflection a soothing sense that it is after all a "fever-fit" rather than "vigorous life," and in the end a most genial and complacent satisfaction in the kindly assurance (no matter God's glory, Christ's Blood, men's souls, hell's fire) that the one thousand a day who went to confession will not persevere, and so will be damned! Alas! alas! there are beings, they are not inmates of heaven, nor dwellers upon earth, who share to the letter these feelings, hopes, and fears, and sympathies! He who wrongs himself by expressing them was beside himself: he had none such; he would die rather than have them, but those cruel things

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he has written. And it was unavoidable; they were due from him to his system. Again and again let us say such things are not of or belonging to himself.

Some time ago a party of young men, members of one of the protestant universities, were travelling in Italy, and stayed for a while to lionize * * *. From this city one of the party A wrote to a college friend C at home, telling him religion was in a miserable condition there, nobody went to confession, half the educated people were infidels, with more to the same effect. When the long vacation was over, B one of the travelling party, on meeting C for the first time in the term is saluted thus, "Well, so things are in a very bad way at * * *" B, pleading ignorance, C tells him of A's letter; "Why," observes B, "A saw hardly any one but the commissionaire, and could barely talk Italian." This, which we happen to know to be a fact, is a fair illustration of the long-vacation romances, letters and journals of Anglican travellers. Strange that men should not see that the mere protracted existence of the Church is proof enough that she must be something more than the infinitely foolish or infinitely corrupt thing they would have her to be. They prove too much, and destroy their case by the very fulness and completeness of their proof. Yet bold as travellers are before the superstitious Italian or the priest-ridden Spaniard, hectoring, swaggering, bullying, regardless of the pain their rudeness gives, watch them when an English Catho-

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lic comes in upon them while they are lionizing churches, their own countrymen whom they are not so sure are fools, and who at least know *them*. See how suddenly the sense of shame is restored to them! With what quiet speed "the reverence due to consecrated buildings" recurs to them, while the expostulating eye of their Catholic countrymen charms them into decent manners, hushes the loud mocking word, effaces the insulting smile, and quells the staring eye! The vocal wood when the hawk sweeps over it is not more suddenly silent: the wild ass when its ear is bitten is not more magically tamed.

Another objection to the missions is the extreme vulgarity of the scenic effects and mountebank tricks to which catholic missionaries stoop. They actually seem, horribile dictu! as though they preferred the pattern of the Wesleyans and Whitfieldians to the calm sobriety and subdued enthusiasm of the protestant Establishment! Instead of tutoring the people in a right religious taste, and keeping alive a healthy and wholesome tone of ecclesiastical æsthetics among the lower orders, the catholic missioner's grand object seems to be to get the masses together, to bring them within earshot of his vulgar sermons, to excite them to a feverish sorrow for sin by any spiritual clap-trap he can hit upon, and so to wile them into the confessional. Surely the solemn tones of the Divine Office, sung in choir, are more religiously moving than the vernacular hymn set to the tune of a drinking song, or a procession with an image in petticoats. At any rate, if they are

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not more moving, they ought to be; and it is the fault of the Catholic Church that they are not; and in fact she cannot *be* the Catholic Church, else she never could have let the people go so wrong in such matters of spiritual life and death; especially when the grave beauty and maternal majesty of the Church of Laud and Andrewes were in the world to copy from. This is the sort of charge which is brought against us: one while we do no good at all; another while, not so much as we ought to do; and then, what seems worst of all, we do it in such an inelegant and ungentlemanly style. We live in the nineteenth century, and we ought to have our eyes about us; and it surely must be affectation on our parts to pretend to prefer the taste of the Roman Congregation of Rites to the hints of a protestant ecclesiological Society.

Alas! it would be hard indeed to keep our patience with such objectors, if we did not know how much they are above their own criticisms, how much that is high, and noble, and generous, and lofty-minded lives and loves under all this crust of pedantry, and narrowness, and mannerism! They were born for better things than to worship the gentlemanly and canonize the respectable: and by the grace of God in His due time those better things will they do, and better far than we. They are fighting with shadows; they are beating the air; they know not what they want; all they know is, that they are not in possession of it yet; and they are teased by the possibility that it may after all be with us, whom it has been a first

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principle with them to dislike as deteriorated and fallen from nobler things. Men toss most in a dream, when they are on the eve of waking. They seem petulant, but they are in reality affectionate ; they appear wanting in generosity and fairness to opponents, but it is their school and party which cannot afford to let them be otherwise. It is hard to answer them, when we have so few sentiments in common.

We might, however, say something of this sort to them : We, like you, are not without a keen, perhaps a morbid, aversion to what is vulgar. We, like you, may be fastidious to a fault. We might prefer to find S. Abram in his convent, rather than in the brothel, or to see S. Ignatius threading the streets of Rome with a troop of angel-faced novices at his heels instead of a train of wicked women, or S. Camillus in an extasy before his crucifix instead of stopping blasphemies with the unseasonable vehemence of a ranting minister in the wine cellars of the city. But with us it is Hobson's choice. You say, If sinners will not be converted in a grave, decorous, ecclesiastical way, it is their own affair; we are not to blame; the Church is the Church, and she must work in Church ways ; she has delivered her message, and so the purposes of God will be justified in the end. And thus your unexciting round of daily prayers, and boy-choristers, and cool churches with dim religious lights, and solemn music, goes on and on. It is the moon witnessing in her season. Al this is very nice, very pretty, and by no means penitential; but we dare not stop there. We

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have got this instinct for souls in us, of which we have already said so much. While you, and your school-children, and a few aged dependents, are beautifying your quiet and easy solemnities, with all the poetry of mediæval piety around you, the Catholic Church is in the beer-shop or on the skittle ground, at the race-course, or in the booths of the sinful fair. She is hiring the theatre or the assembly-rooms of the provincial town to fight the devil at his own carnival. She lets him choose the ground and name the weapons, rather than that she and he should part quietly on the way, and go their own roads without a conflict. She can see him nowhere but she must try a fall with him. There is that in her which is stronger than a law, and will have it so. If he stoops to low ways, so will she, if only that she may come hand to hand with him: but they will cease to be low, because she has stooped to them; for like her Lord in His abasements, where she condescends she dignifies, and leaves a glory in every spot or occupation, whereto she has humbled herself for the love of souls. If he drags souls through the mire and dirt, through the same mire and dirt will she go after them, leaving it to the angels to keep her sacerdotal vestments fair in God's sight rather than in man's, as "no fuller on earth could white them." Where sinners are, there will she be; if she were not so, she were an hireling, and not the shepherd. You see this is our way, and this is what we have to say for ourselves. If you knew much about us, you would know what and how much we have to sacrifice

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many times in this chace of souls; and how much a catholic priest may *feel* with you, while a higher love is immolating the feeling in him. What seems to you but a proof of vulgar deterioration, may be an act of charity or of duty, which is cutting us to the quick as much as it would do you. We are quite as thin-skinned as you are; but we have no cool wayside oratories into which we can turn, and shirk the dust and heat of the weary day. We must advance, or they that are on our heels will tread us underfoot, and we shall lose our own souls for lack of rough-handed zeal in saving the souls of others.

But you will answer, This is not the full account of the matter! O yes! it is. If you would not judge till you knew all the circumstances, if you would be less irritably on the defensive than you are, if you would believe that we really had half as many kind thoughts of you, and half as great a value for your goodness, and half as affectionate an anxiety about you as we have, and how we coveted to have you among us, for the price we set upon you, then we could get you to listen while we explained to you detail after detail; then you would see things in such a different light, and would not think it bitterness in us to find the same fault with you in your dealings with sin and sinners, as Hazlitt found with Cowper when he said of him that he "shook hands with nature with a pair of scented kid gloves on." O that we could put you into the confessional of one of our huge towns for a week, and we have that faith in the stuff that you are made of, that we could be-

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lieve you would come out of the ordeal with more apostolic vulgarity than the worst of us.

You yourselves, when it comes across you, stoop to the child and to the savage; and does it not strike you that the sinner is about an equal mixture of the savage and the child? We, in our missions, are doing no more than this; and while we are doing, what you are not even attempting, try to think that we know our own business, and are not working at random or unthinkingly. You say, and alas! is it not almost with an air of unmanly triumph? that every priest and monk you meet abroad is not a saint, that men have dreamed such things, and have felt bitterly the awakening. Dear Friends! whose fault is it if you or they dreamed so very young a dream? Have you never read how Jesus spoke of His own Church Militant, of the good fishes and the bad, of the tares with the wheat, of the Judas in the number of the apostles? Have you never heard of Cyprian's letters, of Chrysostom's sermons, of the vicissitudes of Athanasius, of the schism of Meletius, aye, and of the Acts of the Four Ecumenical Councils which you respect? You built a chateau en Espagne, like your own Oxford paper-church, and because the Church in Spain was not the image of it, straightway it was a grievous fallen Church! Are you not dreaming now, you "gentlemen of England, who sit at home at ease?" Do you not meet the Church by the way, and she is out of breath pursuing souls, all the ungraceful indignity of haste about her, her garments disarrayed, her features grimed with toil,

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her feet bleeding, her hands rough and chapped with labour, and the vulgar perspiration streaming from her brow? And you turn aside in pure disgust, and go nestle in some tranquil ruin in a leafy mead by a placid stream, and muse of matin bells, and graceful cowls, and swelling chants, and swinging lamps, and stern crusaders' tombs, and all the elegance of old austerity. And if you had been less precipitate, and stayed to gaze on that overwrought labourer, spent and breathless with keeping together the stragglers of that enormous flock, you might have seen there was a grace, a calm, a majesty, a sweetness, strange, unalterable, not of earth, even there; and as you grew humbler, and more loving, and so your eyesight keener and more true, you might have discovered behind the mask of hard work and of modern occupations the blessed Features of the weary Nazarene, and mayhap have deserved to hear from those efficacious lips that warning word, uttered with converting love, Friend! to eat with unwashen hands defileth not!

But the catholic missioner, who has scandalized you in the fever and the fret of his spiritual agitation, has his seasons of repose, surrounded certainly by less of poetic circumstance than you require. His superiors lay him by from time to time in his convent, where the world comes not nigh him. There his recreation is in the observance of holy silence, in the practice of Christ-like poverty, in the self-denying routine of community duties, and in long hours of sacred communing with the Spouse of his soul. It is in mental exercises rather than in the duties of choir that he

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gains fresh strength for a new campaign; and if you seek for the gracefulness of recollection, for the sweet manners of austerity, for unaffectedness of penance, for the considerate minuteness of fraternal charity, for the chaste fear of God, for the supernatural shyness concealing divine gifts and mystical operations of grace, you will start when spiritual men point out to you, as the trophy of God's love in these respects, the jocular missioner, whom with his quick tongue, and ready laugh, and professional buffoonery, you had already deemed a very mountebank and quack-doctor of the soul. Do ecclesiastical superiors desire to try the spirit of some nun who has ecstasies, sees visions, hears divine locutions, and whose modes of mental prayer, or varieties of infused contemplation baffle the ordinary director of the convent, it is to this same missioner that the delicate function is entrusted, as one experimentally acquainted with the hidden and jealous ways of the Holy Ghost. If the most difficult bye-paths of the ascetic life are to be mapped out, and the awful depths of spiritual abandonment and dereliction to be accurately sounded, it is Scaramelli, after long years upon the rough coarse missions, who is the man to do it. Look at the bland wiles of incipient Quietism, which has turned the heads of generals of orders at Rome, and whose author has his lodging in the Vatican itself, the guest of a pope who is already an approved candidate for the honours of canonization; if they are to be exposed with masterly analysis, and nice discernment of spiritual things, it is Father Segneri, busy burning

cards, and usurping popular tunes with songs of Christian doctrines, all devoured with external occupations, and his friend Pinamonti, jockeying tumblers and mountebanks out of the Valtellina, that are the men to do the work. These are every-day events in the Church, and are given for our instruction by the ever-blessed Spirit, cujus sermocinatio est cum simplicibus.

For the rest of this objection we will dispose of it by a story, which will at once admit the facts and defend them; it needs no comment. If we have said of another attempt that what it gained in decorum, it lost in heart, and so missed its end, may we not say of this that it gained in heart, what it lost in decorum, and so reached its end?

Once upon a time, as story-tellers say, there was a great missioner in France of the name of Morcain. Now it came to pass that this great missioner was going to give a mission in a certain French town, whose inhabitants were very much opposed to missions. The devil did not at all relish the prospect of the aforesaid M. Morcain; and after due deliberation entered into the ouvriers of this French town, and inspired them with a design quite worthy of himself. They met together, and they were not few in number, and they set out with their arms bare, and their teddytiler caps upon their heads, as nice a specimen of sansculottism as may well be conceived. The reader may divine the interior life of this procession, which marched out to salute in somewhat peculiar fashion the approaching missionary. They advanced along the road chanting a parody of the popular song:

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C'est l'amour, l'amour, l'amour,
Qui mène le monde à la ronde,

to this effect:

C'est le Morcain, le Morcain, le Morcain,
Qui dam ne le monde à la ronde;—

The unsuspecting missioner came quietly along in his vehicle, very likely getting up his evening discourse, when lo and behold! he is in the middle of this delectable crowd. However, a Frenchman is not often at fault. Forthwith he descends from the carriage, jumps into the middle of the crowd, takes hold of their hands, and commences dancing in the most brilliant style, at the same time joining in the chorus with right good will, C'est le Morcain, le Morcain. Away he goes dancing and singing, and his sansculottes with him, till they reach the door of the church; into which he also dances, irreverent fellow! and the crowd after him. But there he is on his own ground, and straightway he mounts the pulpit, and preaches a most tremendous fire-and-brimstone sermon, at the end of which he proclaims that if during the whole course of the mission any one who has sung that song wants to go to confession he has only to cry out, Monsieur! j'ai chanté le Morcain, and he shall be heard immediately before any one else. No waiting for turns! No weary delay! No besieging the missioners' confessional for hours! No! he has gained an immediate hearing! And so it was. Ever and anon, during the mission, from the outermost edge of huge crowds of women and others, no matter what was going on, came in a loud

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voice the appointed signal, Monsieur! j'ai chanté le Morcain. No sooner said than done. It is as though he were some royal personage: a passage is formed through the Red Sea of people for him; every one else gives way; no one claims his turn; it is a bargain; it is fun and consolation and earnestness all in one, and there is Monsieur! j'ai chanté le Morcain, foreshadowing his own arrival and acceptance one day at his Saviour's feet in heaven, in tears at the feet of him, who thus knew how to be all things to all men that by any means he might gain some.

F. W. FABER.
Cong. Orat.

Free Hills House. Southampton.
Feast of S. Bartholomew.

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A SHORT ACCOUNT

OF THE LIFE OF

FATHER PAUL SEGNERI,

OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

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CHAPTER I.

HIS BIRTH, PARENTAGE, AND LIFE, UNTIL HE ENTERS UPON THE MISSIONS.

Father Paul was born on the 21st of March, 1624, at Nettuno, a celebrated city in Italy, situated on the coast of the Mediterranean. He was of a Roman family, illustrious for the high offices which it held, and the noble houses with which it was connected. But what above all deserves to be celebrated, as the rare privilege of the family of Segneri, are its piety and Christian virtue; as there has not been known one single member of it, who did not lead an exemplary and innocent life. The father of our Paul was Francesco Segneri, a gentleman of high repute, who in his early youth had dedicated himself to God by a vow of perpetual chastity; but his friends, through their desire that the family might not became extinct, which depended solely

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upon him for its preservation, obtained a dispensation from his vow, and having induced him to enter into the marriage state, procured him a consort in the person of Vittoria Bianchi, a Roman lady, and the only daughter of Stefano Bianchi. Vittoria became the mother of eighteen children, whence it appeared that such a worthy house was destined to survive for many ages; yet, through the accidents common to human affairs, we see it after a short period of time altogether extinct. Among the numerous offspring, our Paul was the first-born, and in baptism the name of Paul was given him in memory of his ancestors; though there is every reason to believe that God so disposed it in His greater wisdom, because He had chosen this happy child to be a faithful follower of that great apostle whose name he bore, and to carry, like another vessel of election, His glorious name before the Gentiles. In his early childhood he displayed a generous, amiable, and lively disposition. Hence his parents took special care in bringing him up in the accomplishments of civil life, in learning, and still more in the holy fear of God; and he was assisted in this practice not less by the exhortations than the example of his parents themselves, especially of his mother, who was a person of singular virtue. This noble lady, who had received her education in a convent, was desirous to remain during her whole life in the peaceful seclusion of the cloister, without even entangling herself in the concerns of this world; but, obliged to condescend to her superiors, she

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found a means of living, even in the matrimonial state, as a perfect religious. For leaving Rome, her native city, according to an agreement previous to the marriage, she chose to dwell for the most part, in retirement at Nettuno, where, far removed from the vanities of the ladies of the world, she wore no other clothing than coarse serge of a dark colour. She spent the greater part of the day in prayer, frequenting the churches, and the holy sacraments; and as much as she was kind to the poor, so was she severe to herself, mortifying herself by fasting, disciplines, and other penitential austerities, constantly occupied in her various devotions, and the care of bringing up her children in a holy manner.

With regard to the childhood of Paul, he showed from the very beginning his strong inclination to the apostolic labour of preaching. It is related of him, that, having collected a number of little boys in some apartment in the house, he used to mount upon a small table, and there inveigh against sinners, reproaching and upbraiding them in the most energetic terms his childish fervour could dictate. If he observed any of the boys to be sleeping, or indulging in frivolous talk, fired with zeal, he would immediately dismount, to go and give them a blow with his hands, or, without leaving his position, he would throw at them for their correction, some book or other such article with which he was well provided. Now, Francesco, his father, seeing that this tender plant grew so prospe-

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rously, thought fit to transplant it to some more fertile soil, and accordingly sent his son to Rome, among the noble inmates of the Collegio Romano. The youth immediately afforded them such an insight into his character, that they already foresaw the glorious progress which was afterwards verified. He was loved and esteemed by all for his talents, his innocence, and the great vivacity and candour of his disposition; and hence his parents built their brightest hopes upon him, and began to form various plans for the advantage of the family. Far different, however, were the designs of God, who destined him to forsake the world, and be employed in more noble pursuits than earthly greatness. He called him by a powerful impulse to serve Him in the Society of Jesus, and the superiors willingly yielded to the pious requests of the youth, provided that he obtained the full consent of his nearest relations. He met with little difficulty on the part of his mother, who esteemed it a peculiar happiness to be able to give to God the first-fruits of her offspring. But not so the father, for it was to him too painful to make this sacrifice, and to deprive himself of a son, who was, as it were, the pupil of his eye, and all the delight of his heart. Paul found it, therefore, necessary to struggle for a long time. At length, on the vigil of S. Francis Xavier, his particular protector, after many austerities and innumerable prayers, he made the last assault upon the will of his father, and by his earnest pleading, but still more by his abundant tears, he succeeded in

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overcoming him. Who could here describe the joy of the happy youth, on finding thus the door open to his holy desires?

That very evening being the 1st of December, 1637, under the patronage of S. Francis Xavier, whose feast was then kept on the day following, he repaired with all haste to our noviciate of Sant' Andrea, and was received by Father Giovanni Paolo Oliva, then master of novices. And certainly it ought not to be esteemed a slight advantage of the new candidate, that he had for his first master in the spiritual life such a man, who was afterwards preacher to four popes, and for some years governed the society in capacity of General. At first, Father Oliva was very apprehensive that so lively a disposition would not be able to accommodate itself to the rigour of religious discipline; but he was soon consoled when he perceived that the vivacity of the novice served only as a spur and an incentive to make him advance more speedily in the way of perfection.

When he had completed the two years of the noviciate, Paul could not be admitted to the usual vows, because on receiving him into the society it was understood that he was some months older than his real age; and when the mistake was discovered, as he was not yet old enough to bind himself to a religious life, it was necessary to dispose of him until he had attained the required age. Meanwhile, therefore, his superiors sent him to the Collegio Romano, to study rhetoric and philosophy. In this noble theatre

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his talents began to shine forth more brightly than ever, and he was always required by the professors to take a part in the most conspicuous exhibitions of that flourishing academy. After he had finished his course of philosophy, he was deputed to teach humanities in the same Collegio Romano, in which laborious duty he spent three whole years. But as the mere occupation of teaching did not fully employ his vast intellect, he applied himself at the same time to the translation into the Italian language of the Second Decade of the Wars of Flanders, a work written in Latin, by the golden pen of Father Famiano Strada; and this translation was brought before the public in his name. This work he undertook in order to perfect himself in the Tuscan tongue, and to lay the first foundations of the sacred exercise of preaching, to which he seemed so happily inclined even from his most tender years, as we have seen above. He was still further confirmed in this idea when Father Vincenzo Carafa, general, of holy memory, happening to hear one of his prones delivered in the common refectory, according to the custom of our students, was so delighted with it, that, calling the youth to him, he caressed him tenderly, and giving him some little object of devotion, encouraged him not to keep concealed the talents he had received from God. He exhorted him to preach, but to preach in such a manner that his labours would be undoubtedly blessed by Heaven. The last hand was put to this work by Father Sforza Pallavicino, who, on account of his eminent merits,

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was promoted to the purple by Alexander VII. This great man had a particular zeal in assisting those subjects in whom he discovered a capacity for performing great things for the glory of our Lord; and as he perceived in Paul such distinguished gifts of nature and grace, he conceived a most tender affection for him, which he ever after preserved, and resolved to cultivate to the best of his power such a fertile soil. A short time after he had a favourable opportunity for this, as the youth became his scholar in the course of theology, and he took care to instil into his mind, not less the speculative sciences than the more refined arts of preaching, oratory, poetry, and the other liberal pursuits in which Father Sforza was eminently skilled.

In acquiring science, the excellent youth lost none of his fervour of spirit, though this is by no means an easy matter, from the distractions which study brings along with it, and the rivalry of companions, which is too often the parent of vanity. I will merely remark as an example from which the rest of his conduct may be learned, that he disciplined himself so severely, that on one occasion he was obliged to have recourse to the infirmarian for the cure of his shoulders, which were all torn by the stripes. Another time, he burst a blood vessel, and vomited so much blood, that the infirmarian asserted he had never had under his care a patient who had lost such a quantity. When the origin of this alarming accident was inquired into, it was found to proceed from certain indiscreet efforts

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which he had made use of in practising acts of mortification and love of God. Hence, it cannot be denied that there was good reason for the remark of the father minister of the college, who on one occasion did not hesitate to call him another S. Aloysius; and also for what Father Sforza Pallavicino said, who composed that beautiful little anagram: "Paulus Segnerus, purus Angelus es." We will here relate as a further confirmation of the truth, a noble testimony given by Father Giuseppe Agnelli, a man highly esteemed by the world for the illustrious works he has written. "Being desired," he says, "to communicate what I know respecting Father Paul Segneri, of happy memory, I have to state that I knew him at school, and was intimate with him, having had to join him frequently in public recitations, and other functions, both of a sacred and literary character. Moreover, I entered the society a few days after him in 1637, and lived with him in the noviciate and the Collegio Romano, and in his company passed through the years of rhetoric, philosophy, theology, and the third year of the noviciate; and during the whole of this time, I do not remember to have remarked in him anything, either in actions or words, which could be considered matter of venial sin, even the slightest. Having attentively observed his conduct, I have derived from him many excellent examples of rare virtue, especially during the last years of his theology, when he perfected in a most sensible manner his whole method of life, so that he became most

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exemplary, and far surpassed that innocent life which he had led to that period. This perfection was seen in his speaking and acting with that exactness which is peculiar to our domestic discipline, as well in the external composition of the body as in that which is visible of the interior from external actions. It has been indeed my constant opinion that he was truly a great servant of God, and worthy of the highest veneration."

Having thus with such innocence and fervour passed through the career of his studies, Father Paul Segneri defended the whole course of Theology in public more like a master than a scholar, and about the twenty-ninth year of his age was ordained priest. He was now inflamed with a new spirit, which went on continually increasing during the third year of the noviciate, which is generally made by those of our Society at the conclusion of their studies. He afterwards, through humility, begged his superiors, that he might have some low class of grammar, and they assigned to him the second school in our college at Pistoja. There he introduced the celebrated devotion of the Bona mors, every Sunday delivering a discourse on some appropriate subject. He also introduced the general communion for every month, which was held in rotation in the principal churches of the city, because the society had not a sufficiently large church; and these holy exercises were embraced by the citizens with universal piety and zeal, whilst they ever preserved a grateful remembrance of the author of them.

It was about this time, that, in addition to his

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other labours, he began to arrange his famous course of Lenten Sermons. Besides reading the Sacred Scriptures and the writings of the Holy Fathers, he had employed extraordinary diligence in studying the Orations of Cicero, in order to learn the most effectual means of convincing the understanding and moving the will, applying to a sacred purpose the arguments of that great master of eloquence. But his disposition, though robust, could not bear to be taxed so severely; and his enfeebled head began to discharge troublesome humours, which descending to his ears, impaired by degrees his sense of hearing, and occasioned in him that partial deafness, which continued during the remainder of his life. This, however, I conceive to have been a master-stroke of the affectionate providence of God, who wished thereby to withdraw that soul from the conversation of the world, and to allure it to an entire union with him alone: and Father Segneri himself looked upon it in the same light, for he was frequently heard to say, "Since I cannot treat much with men, I will treat with God, who will understand me, and make Himself also understood by me."

With regard to his deafness, it appears to me that I ought not to withhold from my readers a beautiful sentiment which he wrote down with his own hand, after he had received from God a greater abundance of grace. In the first place then, it is necessary to know, that after the death of Father Segneri, there were found among his writings certain fragments, in which, with great simplicity, he used to note down, either for the

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aid of his memory, or for his own spiritual profit, the lights which our Lord communicated to him in his ardent prayers; and would it had pleased God that we should have the good fortune to discover more, since in these few we possess no small treasure. But I am persuaded that the father, aware of his approaching death, committed to the flames all the writings of this nature which he could get into his hands, and that these few which we now enjoy, escaped by inadvertence, or to speak more properly, by a special providence of God; and they are all filled with holy ardour, and the most devout affections. In one of these writings, treating of his deafness, he speaks thus: "Sagittæ tuæ infixæ sunt mihi, and confirmasti super me manum tuam." (Ps. xxxvii.) "It appears to me that God has granted me to understand the true signification of these words, which, if I mistake not, are to be explained thus. When a hunter wishes to catch an animal that has fled from him, as a stag or a wild goat, what does he do? He shoots at it a number of arrows, some of which, piercing it in the flanks, compel it either to slacken its pace or to stop altogether, and then the hunter approaching behind, lays his hands upon it. Now I conceive that the royal prophet, in this verse of the penitential psalm, makes use of this comparison; for he had fled from God, and being pursued by the arrows of various tribulations, intimated to him at first by Nathan, and then discharged against him, he is obliged to desist from flight; whereupon God approaches, and laying His sacred hands upon

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him, captures him. The same is done every day by God with innumerable sinners, and the same He appears to have done with me; for having wounded me in the ears, and thereby rendered me incapable of joining the company of men, and following many vanities, after which I used to run like one lost to virtue, He has caused me to relinquish in some degree such a course, and has placed His hands upon me, by inspiring me with a great desire to render myself entirely His, and to abandon vanity to adhere to truth. I have besought Him that 'He would strengthen His hand upon me,' that I may never again escape, and that He would not withdraw His arrows from my ears, if they are sufficiently powerful to hold me fast. Hence I learn that these arrows of tribulations should be *infixæ*, that is, fixed deeply in, because otherwise, being soon withdrawn, they lose their effect; since we see that sinners do not immediately surrender themselves when they feel the wounds of adversity, but only when their adversity has continued for a length of time: and so it has been with me."

When he had completed his sermons, which were composed with that elegance, strength, and spirit, which we so much admire, he began to go out into the country, and preached in many of the most renowned churches, being listened to with more than ordinary fruit and applause. But whilst he was engaged in preaching to others, it pleased the infinite goodness of God to preach to him a sermon which immediately drew him to a much more holy course of life. The affair happened in this manner:

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Father Segneri was dwelling in the city of Perugia, preaching the festivals, in 1660, being then about thirty-six years of age, when, during the vacation of autumn, he retired, according to the custom of our fathers, to perform the spiritual exercises of S. Ignatius. It appears that God was awaiting this opportunity to refine this precious gold in the furnace, and to change him from a good religious into an apostle. He withdrew the veil from before his mind, and discovered to him the secrets of the most hidden truths. In particular, He inspired him with such a clear knowledge of how great a thing eternity is, that for many nights he was not able to close his eyes, terrified with a vehement apprehension of that inscrutable abyss. Motives of fear soon gave place to love, when he felt his heart inflamed with a most ardent desire to sacrifice himself as a holocaust to his Lord, and he thought he heard His sweet voice addressing him, as it were, in a sensible manner in these words: "It is my desire that we should mutually love one another." Nothing more was required to make him immediately, in soul and affections, totally different from what he had been before. Henceforward he cared not for himself nor the world, and his only concern was, how he might faithfully correspond with these kind invitations from heaven. His past life, though so innocent, that to others it would have been matter of the highest consolation, appeared to him to be one series of scandal and miseries, nor could he cease to bewail it, with an extreme regret for having begun so late

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to follow God in earnest: and hence in a letter to a friend, he writes as follows: "I say it with extreme confusion, that I am a mere novice, for there is no consideration which confounds me more than the thought that I have only just begun, after spending twenty-three years in religion, and among all the verses of David, I do not find one which afflicts me so much, or touches me more nearly than that Ego dixi, nunc cœpi." Wherefore, applying himself to a serious and perfect reformation of his life, he represented to himself, by the clear light with which God inspired him, five things as most agreeable to his state, namely, poverty, retirement, prayer, penance, and examination. That he might have his good purposes more firmly and constantly fixed in his mind, he took the initial letters of each of these practices, and from them composed the little word "prope," which he wrote down in large characters, and fixed up in a conspicuous part of his room, no one ever being aware of its signification: and, indeed, we should yet have remained in the same obscurity, had he not at the earnest solicitation of an intimate friend, disclosed to him the whole mystery. Writing afterwards to this same friend, he says: "It was not I who first formed the wish to observe these things, but it was God Himself, who plainly discovered to me that He wished them from me. May it please His divine goodness to enable me to attain to them, and not be unfaithful, for I tremble greatly for myself, but I beseech you not to fail to pray for me, as I am filled with alarm."

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Thus did Father Segneri put his hand to the plough, nor did he ever from that time look back, but always advanced forwards with the steps of a giant running in the course.

This wonderful change was quickly remarked by those in the college, for the good Father was seen to be always absorbed in thought, without taking any sort of recreation, but remaining shut up in his room occupied in prayer, or reading pious books. With regard to his mortifications, he asked and obtained general permission from his confessor to use them as far as he thought he could, without considerable prejudice to his health; but how far his magnanimous fervour allowed him to go on this point, we cannot state, since everything passed in strict secrecy between himself and God alone. We can only say that the terrible blows of the discipline which he inflicted on himself every day, were heard throughout the house, and from many clear signs it is proved that he slept very little, and upon the bare floor. The reform he accomplished in regard to poverty, was yet more extensive; he immediately made a diligent search into whatever superfluities he possessed, and divested himself without delay, not only of these, but even of other things which appeared necessary. Among the rest was a small portmanteau, in which, when on his journies, he enclosed his sermons. From this time forward, he wrapped them up in a poor linen cloth cered with wax; and this was the only baggage he carried with him in travelling from one place to another, however distant they might be.

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As charity continually increased in him, like a mighty flame, fanned by the favourable breeze of the Holy Spirit, he began to feel in his heart a burning desire to shed his blood, and give up his life in honour of Christ; and for this purpose he was very earnest in his entreaties to his superiors that he might be sent to the East Indies. But they, knowing how much good a person of his talents might effect among the Christians of Europe, thought it would tend more to the glory of God to oppose his design, and refuse him permission. This, however, did not cause him to lay aside altogether all hopes of martyrdom; and he assured a friend of his, that he still entertained a confidence of obtaining that great happiness, because he hoped that one day, sailing across the seas, he should fall into the hands of the Turks or other infidels. Meanwhile he went on, partly satisfying his ardent zeal by continuing his accustomed exercise of preaching; he never mounted the pulpit without having previously said many prayers, and given himself a severe discipline. These disciplines too were of such a nature, that some of the neighbours opposite the college of Mantua, where he was then preaching, hearing some one scourge himself so severely and so long together, moved by curiosity, went over to the college, to ask which of the fathers was treating his body in so cruel a manner.

But Father Segneri was not satisfied with this, and remained constantly considering what more agreeable sacrifice he could offer to his beloved Lord; and after repeated supplications God in-

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spired his heart with the resolution to give himself up entirely to the sacred missions, conceiving it to be a ministry so excellent and so profitable to the salvation of souls. Having then obtained the consent of his superiors, he began his apostolic labours, in the year 1665, and continued them until 1692, when he was obliged to abandon them, in conformity with the wishes of the Sovereign Pontiff, who called him to Rome, as we shall find in the sequel. Seeing himself thus favoured by God, and made a particular instrument of His divine glory, he animated himself to follow in the most perfect manner possible, the revered steps of S. Antony of Padua, S. Vincent Ferrer, S. Bernardine of Sienna, and other saints who fertilized Italy by their glorious labours. It would perhaps be esteemed rashness in me, were I to compare Father Segneri with these illustrious champions of Holy Church: but I am certain that whoever has seen the concourse of people who flocked to hear him, the conversion of innumerable sinners, the reconciliation of so many enemies, and all the other good which resulted from the missions of Father Segneri, will openly confess that, though what is related of these labours may, to many, seem the height of exaggeration, it is yet in reality very far from the actual truth.

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CHAPTER II.

THE METHOD ADOPTED BY FATHER SEGNERI IN CONDUCTING THE MISSIONS.

The method which Father Segneri made use of in this sacred exercise, was the following: and it was peculiarly his own, being afterwards adopted by many others of the society. When he was giving missions in the villages and those parts without the cities, he always took up his residence in some place where other villages and neighbouring congregations could conveniently assemble to participate in the general profit. At this place he generally arrived on the evening of the appointed day, remaining six, eight, or ten days, according as there was greater or less need. The dress in which he appeared, was a short, and generally worn-out habit, with a staff in his hand, his breviary under his arm, and bearing a small crucifix on his breast, and the beads of our Blessed Lady suspended from his girdle. He always walked with his legs and feet entirely naked, a custom which he inviolably observed from the time that he set out from our colleges, until, having completed the circle of the missions, he returned after several months. Nor should the pain of always walking thus exposed be made light of, as if his journies were short, for Father Peter Pinamonti, his constant companion in the

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missions, says, that having made a careful calculation of these journeys, he thinks that, reckoning the passage from one country to another, and the many and different processions, Father Segneri never went less than eight hundred miles a year; and, moreover, he had frequently to travel along hilly roads, strewn with cutting stones, or covered with snow and frost. This particularly happened in crossing from Tuscany to Lombardy, a journey which he always made with naked feet, going forty or more miles successively over frost or snow. It was not unfrequently the case, moreover, that in treading upon the earth his feet were sorely pricked by the sharp thorns; and one who followed him for several years, assures us that he has frequently seen him thus wounded, and suffering to such a degree as to cause fever. And, in truth, it was edifying to see such a man, so careless about his person, and yet so serene and joyful, that he moved every one to tender affections and the sweetest devotion.

When Father Segneri approached near to the place destined for the mission, he was met by the parish priest, the different confraternities, and a great multitude of the people. He was himself anxious that this meeting should be as numerous as possible; because, he said, it was an honour paid to the mission; hence, he encouraged and promoted it with as much zeal as he opposed and disliked any manner of escort on his departure after the mission, saying that this was an honour to the missionary. The

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people who had flocked together to meet him, advanced in two bodies, one on each side of the road, and at the first sight of the father, threw themselves on their knees, earnestly begging, with clasped hands, that he would bless them. At this spectacle, the Father, absorbed in God, with his countenance breathing no less majesty than love, received on his knees the crucifix from the hands of the parish priest, or sometimes from the bishop, and intoning the Litany of the ever glorious Virgin Mary, conducted the whole multitude to the church, where, after adoring the Blessed Sacrament, he delivered to them his first discourse, taking for the subject of it, those celebrated words of the apostle, "Pro Christo legatione fungimur, tanquam pro Christo, reconciliamini Deo." (2. Cor. 5.) He described the goodness of God, who though outraged by us, instead of chastising us, sent His ambassadors to offer and ask for peace. Wherefore, he invited his audience to a serious repentance for their sins. He exhorted them to attend assiduously to the sacred functions of those days, and to avail themselves of so excellent an opportunity, esteeming this as a holy week set apart for giving themselves totally to God and to the most important affair of their eternal salvation. Then, turning the crucifix, and this he commonly did with his eyes streaming with tears, he prayed to his crucified Jesus, by the merits of His Precious Blood, in behalf of all those who should come to hear him. In conclusion, he recited the "Ave Maria Stella" to the Mother of Mercies,

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begging his audience to recur to her every day for the happy result of this undertaking, and having thus enkindled a holy flame of devotion, retired.

Next morning before the dawn of day he celebrated mass, at which he shed so many tears, and his countenance displayed such sentiments of heavenly delight, that this mass served as a powerful sermon to the numerous attendance which always assisted thereat with the greatest eagerness. When mass was finished, he immediately arranged the procession to one of the neighbouring places. In front advanced the cross bearer; next came the men arranged two and two, after whom, in company with the parish priest and other ecclesiastics, followed Father Segneri, all beaming with joy, his feet naked as usual, with his staff in hand, and cap on his head; and behind walked the women, they also, preceded by their standard, with a modesty that appeared angelic, and caused extreme edification. On the way they chanted, divided into two choirs, either Litanies or the Rosary, or certain psalms and spiritual praises, particularly a hymn set to verse by the ingenious zeal of Father Segneri himself, and intended to express the principal mysteries and maxims of our holy faith. Between every verse of the psalm or hymn, were inserted these sweet words, repeated in a loud voice by all, "Praised and thanked for ever be the Names of Jesus and of Mary;" nor is it possible to express the common jubilee when they heard the hills and valleys all about resound with

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the praises of their Creator, a harmony so joyful as to fill heaven and earth with delight. Thus they advanced two, three, or four miles until they reached the destined point, where they were joined by crowds of others who were anxiously awaiting them. Then Father Segneri, receiving the crucifix from the hands of the priest, addressed them, and this he did generally in the open air, either because the churches were too small to contain the numbers who followed him, or because he could be better understood by them in the open country, which was more adapted to expand and communicate his voice. Mounting on some elevated position, he there delivered to them his discourse, generally concluding it by some tender address to the crucifix, which he embraced in his arms, and bathed with tears of the warmest affection. After this he inquired if there were any enmities existing among them, and having ascertained, he succeeded so effectually in soothing the most excited minds, that in a place among the mountains of Piacenza, it is related that he concluded a peace among many, who for twenty successive homicides, were just on the point of taking the most dire vengeance. Having left the people consoled and pacified, the procession returned to the place of his residence in the same order, and chanting in the same manner as before.

When the hour of dinner had passed, there were seen approaching from all parts, various processions, devoutly singing as they advanced, and attended by an immense concourse. And

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this happened, notwithstanding the want of zeal or spirit of some pastors, who, in the beginning, excused themselves from conducting their flocks to these pastures of life; alleging that there could not be found even one to carry the cross; whereas when it came to the real proof, the result was so far the contrary, that the peasants left their labour, their flocks, their houses, and even whole villages were abandoned. Hence it happened on one occasion, that a party of idle vagabonds, coming upon a village without any protection, had an opportunity of carrying off whatever plunder they thought fit. Many rose at midnight to finish their necessary employments in time: the greatest favour that children could ask of their parents, or wives of their husbands, was, not to be prevented from attending the mission; and some who laboured for their daily bread, were content to earn a little less wages, in order to be allowed to leave their work, when the time arrived, for setting out with the rest. We know many respectable persons of so delicate a constitution that they dared not leave the house even to hear mass on feasts, who yet on these occasions walked for a whole week in processions through long and tedious roads. In the printed account of the missions, given by Father Segneri, among the mountains of Modena, in the year 1672, there is a remarkable case related of a priest, who for many years had endured grievous defluxions, and to such an extent that he was seldom fifteen or twenty days without an attack. His feet used to swell with the excessive pain, especially if they

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were not bathed or were cold; and yet, during the time of the mission, he used to walk always with naked feet, even on the most rainy days, without experiencing either then or even after, any return of pain. Not less wonderful was that which happened in Terra di Villa, in the diocese of Lucca, to a man who from the great heat of his blood, was attacked about every month with a burning erysipelas in one leg, which caused him excessive suffering. Being thus harassed by his accustomed pains, he wished to join in procession with naked feet, and by a remedy so opposed to the nature of his wants, he was freed from all the uneasiness which he had endured, and nine months after it was attested, that up to that day he had not had the smallest attack of the malady. On the other hand, there were instances in which the want of faith and piety of some was punished, who made slight of these sacred functions. Near to Castell' Aguaro, certain proprietors refused to allow their labourers to attend, retaining them for the purpose of sowing their fields, but that year they saw their granaries empty, and did not collect even sufficient seed to sow the land the next year. Others on the Riviera di Genova, not heeding the courteous invitation of the father, stayed away to mow their meadows, when all on a sudden a violent wind arose, which scattered the hay and bore it away altogether. One young man met with a still worse fate, who, in contempt of the mission, mounted a mule that he might not be present. Having got beyond the gates, the animal rearing up, threw him from his saddle

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on the stones, so that the unhappy young man, all bruised in his head and bones, was obliged, in spite of himself, to return.

All being now arrived from the different parts, and assembled together in the open country, they took their seats in good order, the men being separate from the women. Then Father Peter Pinamonti, the fervent companion of Father Segneri, mounted a platform to instruct them in the Christian doctrine, explaining the various points of the greatest importance, such as the use of confession and communion, the pardoning of injuries, flying the immediate occasions of sin, and other subjects; bringing in examples, and following a method so adapted to his audience, that uniting the agreeable with the useful, he, at the same time, instructed and delighted them in a most wonderful manner.

When the above exercise was concluded, Father Pinamonti remained to instruct the children in the principles of faith, whilst the rest repaired to the church. There, as the Adorable Sacrament was exposed, the little chaplet of the Five Wounds of our Lord was recited, which Father Segneri, who was in the pulpit clothed in a surplice, interrupted by three devout addresses to the hands, feet, and side of our Saviour; and having given the benediction with the Blessed Sacrament, the father, laying aside his surplice, and raising the cross, advanced toward the place where a little before they had assembled to hear the explanation of the Christian doctrine. The Laudate Dominum omnes gentes was now sung, and the Ave Maria,

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which was repeated by all in a loud voice, and then the father commenced his sermon: but of what nature those sermons were, they can ill conceive who have not heard him. It will be sufficient, however, to know that they were a pattern of sacred eloquence, being composed of powerful reasoning, ardent affections, and lively figures, but, above all, of a most inflamed zeal, so that they seemed to hear a S. Francis Xavier preaching in the Indies. The subjects of his discourses were chosen from among the most striking which the holy Gospels afford, as the necessity of penance, the great danger of those who defer it until death; the heinousness of mortal sin; the terrible nature of the divine judgment, and the inexpressible pains of hell; with other points, all conducive to rouse the dormant, and to restore their senses to such as by their own fault had abandoned them. After this he always descended to some particular subject, and reproved some vice into which sinners most commonly fall; for example, the robbing God of souls by means of scandals; concealing sins in confession through shame; fomenting hatreds and enmities; robbing one's neighbour of his property or good name, and joining in such dances and games as serve for incentives to a thousand sinful practices. Towards the end of the sermon, transported oftentimes with zeal, to give to others an example and a stimulant to penance, he would encircle his head with a crown of piercing thorns. Then putting a rope about his neck, he in an instant unloosed his upper garment, remaining with a

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smaller under one all open about the shoulders, and taking an iron discipline in his hand, he began to tear his flesh most severely. Not content, however, with this, he had invented another instrument yet more barbarous, which was a circular piece of cork, armed with about fifty sharp points; with this he used to strike violently his naked breast during the last penitential procession, and on other occasions when he was anxious to conquer the obstinacy of such as persisted in refusing to make peace with their enemies. So much blood was by this means drawn from his veins, that in course of time the physicians, to obviate the danger of his life, found it necessary to oblige him to lay aside the practice. It is easy to imagine what were the sentiments produced in that numerous assembly by such a cruel spectacle. Nothing was to be seen but tears, nothing could be heard but continual sighs, and an incessant calling to heaven for mercy. In fact, this manner adopted by Father Segneri made such a powerful impression, that it seemed impossible not to be moved to compunction: hence it happened, that when any miserable sinners were determined to continue in their guilty course, they embraced this expedient suggested by the devil, that when they knew the mission to be drawing nigh, they left the place, and went to live during those days in some other part of the country.

Very many there were, who, excited by mere curiosity, went to hear the sermons, and became captivated and converted by the zeal of the father.

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This good fortune happened particularly to six infamous assassins, who, being all converted at once, went and threw themselves, filled with compunction, at the feet of Father Segneri; and he, having conquered all difficulties, obtained for them from the prince a free return to their homes. So many were the conversions wrought in this class of men, the most perverse in the world, that the Bishop of Piacenza, in a letter which he wrote to our father-general, could express himself in these words: "There are seen in the ordinary processions of every day, crowds of robbers, clothed in sackcloth, and crowned with thorns, walking with naked feet, and weighed down with heavy crosses. Formerly notorious bandits, they have now abandoned their wicked lives, and having made their peace with God, are resolved to reform their conduct." Still more singular was the conversion of certain Jews; one of these, not able to persuade himself that a religion preached with such extraordinary demonstrations of piety, could be false, immediately after the sermon ran to kiss the crucifix, while the father, shedding tears of delight, pressed him tenderly to his bosom, and the whole people showed signs of unspeakable joy.

The sermon being finished, Father Segneri used to exclaim, with his countenance all inflamed, and continuing to scourge himself more than ever, "Whoever is innocent, let him remain, but those who acknowledge themselves sinners, as I am, follow me." Whereupon he set out for the church to undergo the discipline which

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was taken every day after the sermon. In some places the laudable custom of taking the discipline was not only not in use, but they scarcely knew the name of it; and even when they heard it related, that in the missions this penitential exercise was adopted, they held it up to scorn, and boasted that among them at least it should never be introduced. Yet, incited by the words and example of the father, they flocked to the church in such numbers, that it was soon necessary to close the doors, and sometimes even place guards to keep out the great crowd which would have caused the utmost confusion. When the doors had been shut, the *Miserere* was intoned, and the people, baring their bodies upwards from the girdle, inflicted the most cruel disciplines on their flesh. Those who could not obtain any of the disciplines which were distributed, struck themselves with cords or girdles armed with iron points. Some made use of the very beads of the Madonna, which they carried in their hands, and such as had nothing else, inflicted blows upon their faces, and beat their breasts with closed fists. Nor ought we to pass over the fervour, however indiscreet, of a good soldier who attached to a string a ball of wax, round about which were inserted several splints of glass, and by mangling his shoulders in this dreadful manner was in imminent danger of contracting an incurable mortification. To the suggestions which Father Segneri was accustomed to make use of on these occasions, there was heard in reply an universal exclamation, "Peace! Pardon! live Jesus! Ra-

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ther die than ever commit sin any more!" And these cries were re-echoed by the beating of hands and the piteous groans of a vast concourse of women who stood outside, as they were excluded from exercises of this nature. Frequently the father, moved by a fresh impulse of zeal, would exclaim, "Who is the greatest sinner to be found in this church?" and it was truly affecting to hear them all exclaim with one voice, sobbing, "I! I am the greatest!" whereupon the tears gushed forth in such abundance, and the scourging was continued with such fervour, that the place seemed to be transformed into that prison of the penitents, described by S. John Climacus. It was not unfrequently a matter of the greatest difficulty to put an end to the severe flagellation, the repeated signs being found insufficient which were given, that the alloted time might not be exceeded, commonly not longer than a quarter of an hour.

This discipline during the day time was instituted principally for such as came from a distance, and had to return to their homes in the evening; and therefore, in the more populous places, the father used to add another at night, to serve for those who lived near the church. About the approach of evening there was placed on the steps of the altar a crucifix, which was laid upon black cloth, having a lighted taper on each side. The people being here assembled at the sound of the bell, they were joined by Father Segneri, who had his garment loosened behind, and was girded with a rope, while a

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coarse halter was suspended round his neck, and a black hood drawn over his face; a long chain was attached to his feet, and in his hand he carried his discipline pointed with iron. With these penitential preparations, he fell prostrate before the altar, and with great reverence adored the sacred presence of our Lord; and a naked cross being raised aloft by one of the priests and attended by numerous lights, a mournful procession started from the church. The members of different societies walked two and two in great numbers, clothed with their sackcloth, their feet entirely naked, and not a few of them crowned with thorns. The greatest part disciplined themselves to blood, and among them was nearly always to be seen a quantity of little boys, who, young as they were, mortified their innocent bodies, to the great astonishment and edification of all who happened to see them. Equally extraordinary were the means of punishing themselves which the fervour of many dictated to them. Some bore huge crosses on their shoulders, some carried heavy stones suspended from their necks, many wounded their breasts with sharp flints, whilst others tied themselves to one another with heavy chains in the manner of slaves. Some with their hands extended and bound to a piece of wood walked like men crucified; and there were even found others, who, with their bodies bent down to the earth, but their souls raised up to heaven, put themselves like beasts under the yoke of oxen, exposing themselves to the ignominy attendant upon this penance, in atonement for their having

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formerly submitted to the miserable yoke of the devil. Nor was it persons of low condition only who afforded these examples, but men of rank, those engaged in a religious life, and persons of every respectable state; even the most delicate ladies very frequently, wearing a cloak, and with their shoulders modestly covered, mingled in secret among the rest, and disciplined themselves most cruelly. After the confraternities came the priests, always with naked feet, and crowned with thorns, and behind the priests appeared Father Segneri in that painful garb I have above described, inflicting upon himself a succession of cruel blows, as powerfully as the vigour of his arm could direct. Then followed the men in crowds, and after them closing the procession the women. On arriving at some of the more spacious places the procession would stop, and the father, uncovering his face, and ascending a slight eminence, inculcated some striking sentence from the Holy Scripture, dwelling principally with a voice of thunder upon the formidable threat of our divine Saviour: "Nisi penitentiam egeritis, omnes simul peribitis."

"Sinners," he would explain, "either penance or hell! You know that between the two there is no alternative; decide, then, which of the two you will choose, penance, or hell!" To this forcible appeal, all seized with a salutary dread, exclaimed without ceasing, as the tears poured downed their cheeks, "Penance! penance!" nor is it possible adequately to express the emotion of that people when in the obscurity of the

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night, they beheld in such a frightful condition, a man so celebrated for his virtue and learning, who all covered with tears and perspiration, and seeming as if he came from another world, was preaching penance with such ardour in the name of God Himself.

Thus, when they had made a considerable circuit, the procession returned to the church, and the women being excluded, as usual, the evening discipline commenced, which may with propriety be styled the scourge of hell. There sin was truly detested, and resolutions were formed, the most powerful that a contrite heart could possibly conceive. Some were found who did not hesitate even to assert that they were content, if God would pardon them their past sins; for as to the future they had no apprehensions of relapsing into them. Many sinners who, up to that time, forgetful of God and the salvation of their souls, had been living in the constant commission of every kind of wickedness, now deplored their sins with heartfelt repentance; and some of those who wished to make a public and distinct confession, could scarcely be withheld by the express commands of the father, from declaring aloud all their crimes. Among other examples, there was on one of these occasions a poor man, who, drawing from his pocket a purse filled with money, began to cry out, "Behold here, this is money which I have unjustly robbed; take it, holy father, blessed father, and restore it to those to whom it belongs;" and he did not cease sobbing and wailing, thinking that he had for

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a base interest sold Christ like the traitor Judas. This example inspired similar sentiments of compunction into the whole crowd. Hence we may see the reason of the remark of a certain illustrious person, who having seen some of these miracles of penance, used to say, that he never could have been persuaded that the missions of Father Segneri had such effect, had he not himself been a witness of it.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE CONCLUDING EXERCISES IN THE MISSIONS.

At length, amidst the observance of these holy exercises, they came to the last day which was set apart for the general communion. To accommodate the great multitude, it was generally necessary to arrange this communion in the open country, where there was constructed from the boughs and foliage of trees, a temporary church of rude design, with an altar as richly decorated as circumstances would permit; and they always took care to have different doors, so that the men could enter without confusion at one side, and the women at the other. Before the dawn of morning, numerous companies appeared, advancing from different directions, with lighted torches and sweet harmony, all eager to partake, at the earliest moment, of the bread of angels. Then the father, having celebrated the first mass, with

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indefatigable zeal and delight, assisted at every work; now making necessary arrangements; now administering the holy communion with his own hands, or with devout ejaculations inflaming the souls of those who were approaching the sacred table, and who frequently amounted to eighteen or twenty thousand persons, though the numbers are much less to be accounted than their piety, their sighs and tears, effects too seldom met with on such occasions. It was, indeed, a subject of joy to see beneath the shade of those trees, forty or fifty priests, each surrounded by a crowd of devout penitents, so that the whole surrounding country seemed to be bringing forth a new kind of fruits, fruits of Paradise, which tended wonderfully to inspire gratitude to our Lord.

When midday arrived, and a short time had been given for refreshment, the last solemn and general penitential procession was commenced in the following manner. In front, behind the cross, walked the little girls in white frocks, with a veil which partly covered their faces, and a crown of thorns upon their heads, having their eyes modestly fixed upon a crucifix which they carried in their hands. The rest of the females followed, both widows and married women, dressed out like the girls, except that they did not wear white. Next was seen an array of venerable priests, with naked feet and cords about their necks, carrying in their hands crosses or skulls. After these succeeded the brothers of the confraternities in cloaks; who were followed by the rest of the men in short habits, all walking two and two, their feet

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being bare, and their heads girded with thorns. Those who composed this procession generally amounted to several thousands, many of whom, scourging themselves as they went along, left their traces in the road with their blood, and here in particular was displayed the ingenious fervour of some, in choosing their penitential garb, so as to manifest to the public the interior compunction of their hearts. Meanwhile the priests with a sorrowful and mournful voice entoned the "Miserere," and every verse was interrupted by the rest of the crowd singing in a loud voice, "Miserere nostri Domine, miserere nostri," which, like the trumpet from heaven, stimulated all to appease by sincere repentance the terrible wrath of an offended God.

But the most moving spectacle in this devout procession was Father Segneri. He walked last, in the most lowly sentiments of humility, yet radiant with heavenly joy, all bathed in tears and supporting a large crucifix; besides the penitential habit which the rest wore, he dragged about a very long chain, which was attached to both his feet, and with difficulty allowed him to continue his steps. The multitudes of people, eager to enjoy this sacred function, were so great, that about the Riviera di Genova, they were computed to be once as many as seventy thousand persons, numbers of whom had come a distance of thirty or forty miles; many, unable to find room on the ground, climbed up trees, and frequently huge branches were broken entirely off by the weight that pressed upon them.

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The procession having reached the place agreed upon in the country, Father Segneri prepared himself for the discourse, to give the last impulse to his ardent zeal. It consisted in a feeling exhortation to constancy in the good they had begun; and in order to put this into execution, he proposed the most certain and efficacious means, such as the tender and confiding devotion to the Queen of Heaven, who is constituted by God the treasurer of all graces; the frequenting of the holy sacraments; and above all, the flying the immediate occasions of sin; for it is in vain to expect that he will not fall into the precipice who allows himself to play upon its brink. He then gave the solemn benediction in the name of the Sovereign Pontiff, according to the custom of the missionaries of our society. Previously, however, inflamed like an Elias, with the crucifix in his hand, he fulminated a dreadful malediction against such as should dare to be the first to break the concord now established, or to introduce anew the scandals of forbidden games, balls, wakes, and indecent love, citing for this purpose the words of Joshue: "Maledictus vir coram Domino, qui suscitaverit et ædeficaverit civitatem Jericho." Then resuming a placid countenance, he turned to bless every condition of persons there present, giving to each state a proportionate address. He blessed their families, their houses, their cattle, their lands, and their interests. Finally, taking a lighted torch in his hand, he exclaimed, "Fire, fire, to the cards!" which had been presented to him for this

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purpose by the very gamblers themselves now repentant; and all the people crying out, "Fire! fire!" the cards were consigned to the flames before the public view. Immediately the Te Deum was intoned in thanksgiving to our Lord for all the good He had been pleased to work among them during those days. "But since I know well," Father Segneri used then to say, "that by my sins I have prevented much of the good which the Divine Mercy would otherwise have bestowed upon you, it is my duty, that whilst you thank Him, I should humbly beg pardon for my crimes, and offer to Him for them some little satisfaction." Whereupon, uncovering his shoulders, he began to apply his discipline that was armed with iron points, tearing his flesh in the most barbarous manner. The more blood he shed, the more freely did tears flow from that immense audience, who grieved beyond measure to see that, not content with so many labours and fatigues, he wished to sacrifice his very life for their salvation. No longer could the chanting of the priests be heard; the only sounds that were audible, were the sobs and cries of the people, who besought the father to cease that butchery which was due not to his, but to their sins. In this pitiful condition the good father, raising himself on his feet, and wishing to take leave of them, said, "My dear Christians, I leave you here in the open arms of mine and your Saviour, to whom I recommend you with all my heart. I do not think we shall ever see one

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another again in this world, but, if it please God, we shall meet in Paradise. When you hear the news of my death, I beseech you, by that tender love which I bear you, to pray the Divine Goodness to grant repose to my soul." Oh! then did the wailings and sobs increase, and it seemed that in every place was renewed that moving tragedy, which happened when S. Paul, on starting for Ephesus, was taking leave of his faithful at Miletus. Multitudes wished by all means to follow him, nor could they withdraw themselves from a father so beloved and so affectionate. It was therefore nearly always necessary for the humble father to set out in secret, more in the manner of a flight than a departure.

Thus Father Segneri, without allowing himself any repose, that same evening, or at the latest the next morning, betook himself to some other place to recommence his arduous labours, and to reap some new harvest. Though the rain might pour in torrents, and the winds blow a complete hurricane; though he had to travel by night through forests and dangerous roads, yet could nothing of this appal him, and he always walked first with a joyful countenance, encouraging his companions. It was his constant saying, that he who gave himself up to the sacred duty of the missions, should esteem himself as dead, without having any consideration for his own life. And thus he implanted firmly in his mind the thought of hell, of his sins, and of eternity, which lightened all his sufferings; hence, if any one ever exhorted him to have more care of himself, and

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to take precautions against the rain which fell in streams from the skies, he used to answer, that it was better to suffer water than fire, and frequently added, "Oh, if you knew how much I fear hell!" At other times he would recall to the minds of those who prayed he would not discipline himself, nor extract so much blood, that sentence of the apostle, "Sine sanguinis effusione non fit remissio;" or he would exclaim with a sigh, "Eternity is approching!"

CHAPTER IV.

OF THE FRUITS OF FATHER SEGNERI'S MISSION, CHIEFLY IN PROMOTING RECONCILIATIONS BETWEEN ENEMIES, BANISHING GAMBLING WITH CARDS, AND PROFANE SONGS.

SUCH was the method which Father Segneri, according to the convenience of places, was accustomed to practice in country places. The one he followed in large cities, was very similar, except that during those missions it was not necessary to go out into the country, and in the morning, instead of conducting the people to the neighbouring villages, he assembled them in some church of greater devotion, in the most populous part of the city, and there delivered to them a discourse.

From this description, every one may conclude how welcome, and at the same time, fruitful, were these sacred exercises. It is well known that

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their serene highnesses, the Dukes of Parma and Modena, who, by a rare example of piety, attended in their respective states an entire mission, entertained the most unbounded admiration of them, and looked upon them as invented by Father Segneri under a special inspiration of God for the salvation of souls. The same is affirmed of persons of every condition, of bishops and cardinals, among whom Signor Cardinal Rossetti, of glorious memory, formerly bishop of Faenza, not only evinced the greatest delight when he had the fathers preaching in his diocese, but, moreover, on receiving letters from the curates and vicars respecting the great good which was continually seen to arise from the missions of Father Segneri, used to bathe these letters with tears of joy on account of the unspeakable consolation he derived from them.

But the more these holy exercises were approved by persons inflamed with zeal, the more did they provoke the fury and indignation of the powers of hell; and it seems that the devil himself on one occasion expressed as much. A woman was conducted to Father Segneri, troubled with a malignant spirit, which being expelled by virtue of a stern command from the father, said, gnashing his teeth as he departed, "Thou wicked friar, thou wicked friar, I could expect nothing else from thee! But I will have my revenge for it." The vengeance which he took, was this. The next day, as the general communion had to be administered, and the last penitential procession had to be arranged,

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the father stood in great need of some repose, but he found he could not get a moment's sleep, as the devil never ceased the whole night to knock at the door of his room. The next morning, the father, meeting one of his companions, said, smiling, "The devil we overcame yesterday, has taken his revenge sure enough, for he has not allowed me to sleep a wink."

The principal fruit of these blessed missions was undoubtedly that which we cannot detail, as it is buried under the inviolable seal of sacramental confession. In consequence of his deafness, and the numerous duties which occupied his time, Father Segneri could not devote himself to this sacred tribunal, reserving only a few for himself, whom he heard in the retirement of some room; but this deficiency was abundantly supplied by his companion, who, assisted by several other priests of equal zeal, attended the confessional the whole day and the greater part of the night. The numbers and the fervour of the penitents was such, that many came even at midnight to take up their positions at the church doors, in order that the next morning they might occupy some place near to the confessional, and they sometimes waited patiently, standing for whole days. The greatest part of them were anxious to satisfy their consciences by making general confessions of their whole lives, and they made these confessions with such compunction and tears, that, instead of reproving, it was generally necessary to console them, that they might not despair of the Divine mercy; for some, trem-

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bling with anguish and fear, would ask, sobbing, "Father, do you think God will pardon me these my enormous sins?" In the account which was printed at Faenza, it is related of some, that not being able to overcome the shame they felt in disclosing some heinous sins, they had purposely undertaken long pilgrimages to Rome and to the holy house of Loretto, intending to discharge the poison of their souls at the feet of some unknown confessor; but still failing in courage, they had returned home more sacrilegious than ever. There were even found some, who were not converted when they saw themselves more than once at the point of death, and on the very brink of hell. Yet all these, happening, most fortunately for their souls, to hear Father Segneri, made a sincere and good confession, and were brought back like sheep delivered from the mouth of the wolf, to the bosom of the Good Shepherd.

I may here relate the singular means which God adopted to call to His grace an unhappy wretch, who for a long course of years had been buried in habitual sins, without ever yielding to the repeated admonitions of the father. Whilst he was asleep one night, he thought he was at the point of death, and he was raving and tossing about as sinners generally do who find themselves approaching that awful passage from time to eternity. Presently, he fancied he saw Father Segneri, who was standing by his bedside, and with a placid countenance, was comforting him and reciting with him the prayers appointed by

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the Church for the recommendation of the dying soul. I do not pretend to decide whether this dream was casual; but this is certain, that the man awaking all trembling with fear, waited not for morning to dawn, but went immediately in search of a confessor, at whose feet he laid the heavy burthen of his crimes, and related to him the dream which had aroused him from the profound lethargy in which he had hitherto been reposing.

Astonishing was the generous resolution with which penitents withdrew themselves from all dangerous occasions, and their rectifying null marriages, laying aside usurious practices, retracting so many calumnies, setting aside so many forged wills and other writings, and restoring the property of others in considerable sums; which are some of the most difficult things which the Christian law imposes upon us: and yet confessors could say that during the eight days of the mission only secret restitutions had passed through their hands to a greater amount, than during eight whole years previously. Nor was the zeal of Father Segneri confined to secular persons and sinners in the world only, it was exerted in the sacred cloisters among the virgin spouses of Christ. Some monasteries he so far reformed as to bring them back to their first discipline, and induce them to embrace community life, which, up to that time, neither confessors nor bishops had been able to introduce. There dwelt in a certain convent an abandoned soul, who was like a devil among so many angels, sunk

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in the deepest abyss of misery which it is capable for a female in the cloister to be; yet the father by his sweet and efficacious behaviour disposed her to a sincere repentance. This unfortunate wretch was shown in a vision to another nun of the same convent, who was much favoured by God, having her head, instead of being covered with hair, all entwined with serpents, and Father Segneri was engaged tearing off one by one these venomous reptiles.

But passing over the more hidden fruits of these holy missions, it will be necessary now to give a glance at the manifest effects which they produced. And first of all beyond doubt deserve to be mentioned the reconciliations which were effected, and so numerous were they, that without at all boasting, we may call Father Segneri the angel of peace. At the conclusion of the infliction of the discipline and of the sermons, which was the time when the father principally spoke on this subject, there were always to be seen some who, in the fervour of their hearts, went about to find those from whom they had met with the greatest annoyance, and even with tears in their eyes they would beg for pardon on their knees, as if they had been the offenders and not the persons injured. There occured on one occasion a rather curious accident of this kind. After the evening discipline a man, raising himself up, ran in haste among the crowd to throw himself at the neck of another, who was at the time bent down to the ground. The latter, feeling himself pressed on the neck, raised his body to

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ascertain who it was; and recognizing the countenance of his enemy, he was seized with such fright, that imagining he was attacked, began to cry aloud for help: soon, however, perceiving that the other, bathed in tears, was earnestly imploring peace, he joyfully assented to a reconciliation, and a most cordial friendship was established between them.

In almost all the countries where Father Segneri exerted his glorious labours, there raged between different families, and between all classes of persons, hatreds and enmities not unfrequently mortal; these arose principally from motives of interest, disgrace, treachery, and murder; nor was the authority of the magistrates and princes of sufficient weight to put down these discords which rankled in their breasts. But the omnipotent grace of God, who holds in His hand the hearts of men, knew well how to triumph by means of His servant; and in a single district of the States of Modena there are recorded no fewer than a hundred enmities which were happily composed; and there was not any place which he visited that he did not leave in the enjoyment of peace and perfect union. Hence many pleaders in the criminal courts who gained their livelihood by the misfortunes of others, used to complain of the missions, that they deprived them of their ordinary gains.

We may here adduce a few particular cases, which will serve as an example of the rest. The country of Borzonasco, situated among the mountains of Genoa, was divided into two factions,

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between whom had occured forty murders; and the Republic of Genoa itself had laboured in vain for two years to reconcile the parties. It may be said with truth that God had reserved this great consolation for Father Segneri, for on the morning of the Feast of S. Lawrence, he effected a general union between the whole people, ratifying the terms by the hand of the public chancellor, and the next day a large cross was erected by the citizens in memory of the event; whilst the Republic evinced special gratitude, sending messengers with letters to thank the author of this happy reconciliation. Two of the principal cavaliers of a certain city entertained such deadly hostilities towards one another, that each of them had about his estate more than forty assassins, many of whom always accompanied him when he left his house; nor was there any one who could treat of an accommodation, so extravagant were their pretensions. Father Segneri went out in quest of them, and by his prudence and the efficacy of his discourse, having proposed to them reasonable terms, overcame all their differences, and inducing them to lay aside their arms, established concord in the whole country, which was daily expecting some deluge of blood to result from these troubles.

A mitred abbot, for the murder of his two brothers, by which unhappy event the family had become extinct, would not for many years listen to a word about reconciliation. Having heard, however, a sermon during the mission, he was not only induced to grant pardon, but even at the

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last penitential procession, he placed himself between the two men who had committed the murder, and these three in the habit of penance, afforded a remarkable example, walking closely united together by the same cord, to show the concord and the strict bond of charity which joined their hearts. One of the principal inhabitants of a certain place had received some wounds; whereupon, fired with indignation, and agitated with the most violent animosity, he had already collected in his house a large number of armed men, to take vengeance on the offenders. All the entreaties of the archpriest and of others were of no effect; but when Father Segneri arrived, before he spoke a single word, the man, whilst the blood was yet dropping from his wounds, converted by the very sight of the good Father, threw himself on his knees before him, and of his own accord offered peace, and this happy conversion filled all with inexpressible astonishment and consolation.

Another case which happened was as follows. A wretched father saw torn from his embraces, and inhumanly murdered, a dearly beloved son, on whom he had reposed all the hopes of his family. What did not Father Segneri do and say to prevail upon him to act as the divine law obliges us on such occasions! but the obstinacy of the man's heart was not to be overcome, he was callous to all suggestions, and at last, Father Segneri threatened him with the curse of heaven. It appears the deluded man made but little account of these threats, and withdrew, still more

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hardened in his guilt. However, the result was not such as he had anticipated. From that time he could not find a moment of repose; he could neither eat nor sleep, and his whole countenance became black as a cinder. After some days, he was obliged again to present himself before the Father, and offered to do whatever he should require: and no sooner had he consented to pardon the murderer, than he felt himself relieved of the violent oppression in his heart, and the hideous blackness disappeared entirely from his countenance. What happened to a good priest was very extraordinary. He had been listening to a discourse delivered by Father Segneri, on the love of our enemies, and felt himself so powerfully urged to this heroic virtue, that he said to the same Father: "If on my return home, I were to find my own brother butchered, I can assure you for certain that I should feel quite disposed to pardon the crime." He returned home in fact, and finding, contrary to all his expectations, that very brother murdered, by a generous victory over himself, he accomplished what he had just before promised, and what God had inspired into his heart, in order to prepare and fortify him against that most disastrous blow.

When Father Segneri met with men, who, like deaf asps, rejected his admonitions to become reconciled, he used to have recourse to more powerful measures, and in imitation of S. Francis Xavier, scourged himself in their presence, or afflicted his body with some more grievous punishment; saying, that since they were unwilling to

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exert themselves for their salvation, he would gladly spend his labour and his blood to procure it for them. This he very frequently did, with a happy result. One among the many occasions, was the case of a father, who, for five years had been bewailing the loss of an only son, who was cruelly slain, and preferred to live like an atheist without the benefit of the sacraments, than consent to a reconciliation. On the morning that the procession visited that parish, this man happened by chance to be present, and when the sermon was concluded, many friendships were established as usual; but when they came to speak of his case, he would not even listen to the proposal. His friends admonished him, his relations conjured him, and above all, Father Segneri employed every exertion of zeal to move him: whilst he, like one possessed by the devil, stamped and raved as the perspiration ran from his body, and gnashing his teeth, made a violent rush to escape through the crowd who surrounded him on all sides. The Father then raising his eyes to heaven, "This heart," he exclaimed, "cannot be subdued but by blood." Whereupon, throwing himself on his knees, and in an instant uncovering his shoulders, he began inflicting on them the most cruel blows, all the time beseeching mercy of God for this poor soul. Yet not even this heart-rending sight could make any impression on the man: wherefore, Father Segneri taking that instrument of torture of which we have before made mention, ceased not to strike his breast with it, and shed a stream of blood, which covered the

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ground on which he stood. The people, uniting in one loud voice, cried out, "Peace! Pity! Mercy! and the sensation was such, that two persons fell fainting to the ground; yet, who could believe it?—even this did not suffice to soften the obdurate heart of the man, more impenetrable than a rock: and the poor Father, having now lost all hopes of gaining him over, was preparing to withdraw from the whole assembly, who exclaimed, "Father, do not abandon him! do not abandon him;" and having united in prayer, it was necessary that the devil should at length yield in spite of himself: for whilst Father Segneri was yet at the foot of the altar, behold! the unfortunate man advances to meet him, and presses his hand with great earnestness, as a sign of his consenting to their requests. Then, bathed in tears, he approaches and kisses the crucifix, begging pardon for all the scandals he had given, whilst the people burst out in sentiments of unbounded joy, and heartfelt gratitude to God.

Very similar to the above was the case of a person in the diocese of Parma. Monsignor Bishop Membrini had personally attempted various times to prevail upon this man to grant pardon to the murderer of one of his brothers, but the labours of the zealous pastor had hitherto been quite fruitless. Father Segneri caused him to be brought into the presence of this prelate, and after many exhortations, asked him what satisfaction he desired; upon which the impious man answered, that he wished for no other satisfaction than to wash his hands in the blood of

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his enemy. "Then," said Father Segneri, "since you wish to wash your hands in the blood of your enemy, wash them in mine, for I declare myself your mortal enemy, as long as you are determined to be a rebel against God." And on saying this he uncovered his breast, and began to pierce it with his cruel instrument, crying out, "Wash then, your hands in this my blood, which I will not cease to shed until you are satisfied." There was scarcely one among the many bystanders who did not weep and exclaim, "No more, Father, no more:" this inhuman wretch alone, savage as a tiger, remained unmoved, and seemed even to delight in this horrible spectacle: when, suddenly struck by the powerful hand of God, he cried out, "Stop, Father, stop! I remit everything in the sacred Wounds of Jesus Christ crucified, and I promise with all my heart a sincere and lasting peace."

It appears that the zeal of the father always met with much greater difficulty in overcoming the hearts of women, since their resentments are more violent than those of men; conformably with the oracle of the divine Scriptures, "Non est ira super iram mulieris." And yet strengthened as he was by God, he often gained glorious victories even over these. In the diocese of Brescia, there had arisen from various injuries, the most mortal enmity between two most distinguished families, supported on either side by all their connexions; and the affair was exasperated to the highest pitch by the murder of a noble youth, who had met his death from one of

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these factions. The mother of the young man, who was a widow, and a lady of high spirit, and no less resentful disposition, enkindled a flame all around her, and thought of nothing but slaughter and destruction. One day during the mission, God in His clemency disposed that this lady should be present at a sermon preached by Father Segneri, on the very subject of forgiveness of injuries; and she was seized with such compunction, that the very same day she went, accompanied by all her train, to the house of the offender, to grant an unconditional pardon, causing thereby no ordinary joy to those who had before witnessed how violently she had been thirsting after revenge. A short time after, when her relations were assembled at her house, the murderer of her son came in company with a number of his friends, and, conducted by his own father, who, attaching a rope to his son's neck, made him kneel down before the lady, and then addressed her: "Behold here at your feet, madam, my son, repentant and humbled; do with him, however, what you wish in satisfaction for your own son." At this pitiful sight the pious matron ran immediately to take the rope from his neck, raised him from the ground, and embraced him tenderly, saying, "This youth shall be to me in future in place of my deceased son." All, then, shedding tears of gratitude, hastened to the church to confirm the reconciliation by kissing the crucifix, and the people evinced their delight on the occasion, by the ringing of bells, and the joyful chant of the "Te Deum."

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Another lady of noble birth had in like manner a son, whom she tenderly loved, murdered. The murderer was apprehended, and the lady, filled with rage, went three several times to the judges, to insist that the criminal should be strangled and quartered by the hands of the executioner. Being informed that Father Segneri was about to visit that place, she toook measures to depart; but on account of certain interests, was obliged soon to return; and finding that the Father was still in the neighbourhood, she retired to one of her villas at some distance from the scene of the mission. Certain zealous persons pressed her to go and hear at least one sermon, and they urged their request with such constancy, that, at last, though it was much against her will, she consented; but whether it was by mere accident, or whether the devil, determined that she should not escape from his hands, had recourse to his artifices, about the commencement of the sermon the weather became very stormy, and the wretched woman, making a pretext of this, hurried away from the spot, still harbouring the same hatred and the same passion. At the conclusion of the sermon, Father Segneri was informed of all that had taken place. Covered as he was with perspiration, and in his naked feet, though at the time it was actually raining in torrents, and the roads were flooded, yet he immediately set out towards the villa, and after a mile of the most uncomfortable walking, arrived in a most wretched plight, and completely soaked through with water, which penetrated to his very skin. For some

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time the lady remained deaf to the exhortations of the father, who threw himself on his knees at her feet, and, at last, by his prayers and tears, extracted from her a generous pardon.

There were some ladies so perverse, that during the time of the missions, in order not to be solicited to grant a reconciliation with their enemies, shut themselves up within their houses, locked their doors, and secured the windows, as if they had been gone from home. But the industrious charity of the father found means even to penetrate into these their hiding places, and by his eloquent zeal succeeded in extinguishing the flames of resentment which raged in their breasts, and making them gentle as lambs. Sometimes by simply causing them to fall on their knees, or by placing his hand upon their heads, he would convert them and sanctify them to such a degree, that though the wounds were open, and the bloody corpses of their children unburied, they invited the murderers to their own table, and even kissed the hand that had wielded the fatal weapon. Hundreds of cases of this nature happened to Father Segneri; but that I may not prove tedious to my readers, I shall refrain from introducing any more. This, however, has been attested by many, that of all the reconciliations that were brought about by Father Segneri, not one has ever been known to have been broken; truly a most singular effect of this heroic spirit and the Divine Mercy. It cannot, indeed, be denied that, though the cases were extremely rare, there were found some who could never be brought to peace,

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neither by the words nor the blood of the good father; such, however, generally paid dear for their obstinacy. To one in particular, on whom he had in vain exhausted all the exertions of his magnanimous zeal, the father said on leaving him, "Go, miserable wretch! thou wilt never more prosper in thy life." Not long after the man went mad, and after wandering miserably about for some time, was found dead beneath a hedge near to Parma. In Genoa, a youth who had obstinately refused to pardon his enemy, some days after put to sea for the transport of certain merchandize, but scarcely had he got clear of the coast than the vessel overturned, and the unhappy youth went to the bottom, without being able to obtain the least assistance from any one.

Besides the reconciliations that were effected, another most inestimable fruit of the missions of Father Segneri, was undoubtedly the banishing of cards. Whoever knows how great an evil is the game of cards, particularly among the poor people, how many scandals, frauds, and thefts, how many blasphemies, perjuries, and even murders, are the lamentable consequences of this species of gambling, will be able to form an adequate idea of the merit there was in uprooting this fatal evil. When, on the last day of the mission, whole baskets-full of these cards were being publicly committed to the flames, there was suddenly heard a fearful crash of thunder in the air; and it was generally believed that the devil wished by that means to

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display his rage at seeing an instrument of so many sins thus entirely destroyed. At the conclusion of a certain discourse, a man rushed into the presence of the assembled multitude, and holding up a pack of cards in his hand, cried out in a loud voice, "These accursed cards have caused discord in my family, and the ruin of my poor sons, and God grant they may not also be the damnation of my own soul;" and he continued in this strain with sentiments of great compunction, which affected all present. Another man appeared totally absorbed in card-playing; so that he sold whatever he possessed and gambled for it. He blasphemed impiously like a Turk, and whenever he lost, used to beat his wife most unmercifully, so that the wretched woman was compelled to make continual applications for a divorce. It was not easy for the charitable advice of the father to take hold of this man; he even protested that he would prefer to live without money, without wife, and without his children, yea, to die without confessing his sins rather than give up his gambling habits. Father Segneri, pitying the frenzy of the unhappy man, went day after day with unwearied patience, continually renewing his assaults, until at length, the wretch, opening his eyes, saw his miserable state; he detested his past madness, gave up his cards with a promise never more to resume them, and having publicly obtained a general pardon for what he had unjustly gained from the sons of various families, was able, wretch though he had been, to participate with the rest in the holy sacra-

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ments. And how clearly may we observe the special providence of our Lord towards him, for in a fortnight afterwards he was attacked by a sudden and dangerous sickness, and finished his life happily for his soul, as we have reason to hope. Now this vice, the occasion of so many evils, was extirpated by Father Segneri to that extent, that at a fair in the district of Modena, it was publicly declared that if any one wished to purchase a pack of cards for as much as a pistole, he could not procure one; and in the city of Ancona, a garden, in which the gamblers used to walk at their leisure, remained for many years untenanted.

Nor should we esteem it a slight advantage of these missions, that they served to abolish profane songs, and introduce others of a more sacred character. Father Segneri accomplished this by means of that hymn, which he himself who studied every possible art to draw souls to God, caused to be published; and of this hymn there were so many copies disposed of, that besides the great numbers distributed by the father himself, a secular youth mentions that he alone sold no fewer than fifteen thousand. This holy song, then arranged in pleasing verse, though it contained about a hundred stanzas, was nevertheless committed to memory by almost every one. It was sung with the greatest joy by the women at their fireside at evening, whilst engaged over their frames or spinning wheel; in the barn as the corn was thrashed, when leading the cattle to the pasture, and at all their other occupations.

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The same was the song of the men, both young and old, in their houses, through the streets, and out in the open country; thus imprinting in their hearts those most important truths, which otherwise might never have entered their thoughts.

To what has already been said, must be added the introduction of a more frequent participation of the sacraments, and the use of so many religious exercises, by means of which whole dioceses became sanctified, and entirely changed from their former condition. Nor was this a torrent which suddenly passes by, nor a flame of straw which is soon extinguished; but it was a durable fruit, especially where zealous curates were met with, who had really at heart the good government and sanctification of their flocks. In many places it has been remarked that for several years after a mission, the people continued to communicate regularly once a month; a devotion so useful and pleasing to God, and introduced by Father Segneri, who at the conclusion of his labours, used to beg this recompence of them for the people. Solemn festivals, which formerly terminated too often in feastings and profane balls, were now celebrated by devout processions and holy exercises of prayer. Every Sunday, instead of passing the time in gambling, the people assembled in the churches to sing vespers, and in the evening met together for the discipline. And with regard to this salutary exercise of penance, it is astonishing how God was pleased to avail Himself in an

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extraordinary manner of the most tender age as an instrument of His glory. We know from very faithful relations, that in many places a company of little boys use to join together, and go about in procession, not only on festival days, but even on those of labour, scourging their naked shoulders, not in play, as boys generally do, but with such seriousness and such fervour, that their flesh was often seen gaping with wounds, and their own fathers could not restrain them, nor could anything satisfy them, unless they were provided with habits and scourges, and left under the free disposal of their Lord, who guided them in this manner as an example to others.

I cannot here refrain from mentioning what Father Pinamonti, the companion of Father Segneri, attested, that having himself returned to some place four years after the mission, and stationed himself in the public confessional, there came to him many persons, who, though they had before been in the habit of committing grievous offences, had from the time of the mission altogether abstained from them up to that time; and the father was highly consoled with this happy intelligence.

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CHAPTER V.

OF THE WONDERS WROUGHT BY GOD IN BEHALF OF THE MISSIONS, AND OF OTHER PRODIGIES PERFORMED BY FATHER SEGNERI.

As the fame of these wondrous fruits was spread all around, it is not astonishing that the people should frequent these exercises in such vast numbers; and we cease to be surprised at the fact that when the mission in their own neighbourhood was finished, they were never able to satisfy their fervour by attending others even at a very considerable distance, and that the missions were so much sought after and gave so much universal satisfaction. The people of Rocca, among others, which is situated in Romagna, after repeated supplications made by their deputies to Cardinal Rossetti, and to Father Segneri himself, seeing at length that there was little hope of obtaining their request, of their own accord made a solemn penitential procession, and exposed in their church the Blessed Sacrament, solely for this end, to obtain from God the favour which appeared so difficult to gain from men. On this account Father Segneri was compelled to interrupt his plans and go where God called him. Winter was already far advanced, and that country bordering on the Apennines, was now covered with snow and frost; and yet a very numerous mission was there held,

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to the extreme delight of the people, who without ever becoming weary, followed the father wherever he went, the fervour of their charity overcoming the rigorous severity of the season.

But, to speak correctly, it must be confessed that this concourse and this great love of the people for the missions of Father Segneri, was principally the effect of a special goodness on the part of our Lord, who in many singular ways was pleased to approve of this sacred ministry, which filled heaven with souls. In order, therefore, not to rob God of the glory, nor deny Him the gratitude which He deserves, I have thought it my duty to bring forward in this place a few examples. First, however, I declare, that since I am about to speak of facts which appear above the order of nature, I shall not produce any that I have not received from witnesses of the highest credit, who have testified to the facts upon their oath, in the presence of a public notary, and the original writings of which I have in my own possession.

Don Pellegrino d'Oglio, rector of the church of our Blessed Lady of Sorrows, in the diocese of Reggio in Lombardy, relates the following case. In the month of May, 1678, Father Segneri was giving a mission there, and as great numbers came from a distance, weary and exhausted with thirst, the rector, moved with compassion, enjoined one of his curates, named Giovanni Belpolite, to distribute wine free of cost to whomsoever asked, from a cask which contained seven or eight barrels. The good curate obeyed, and

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from the commencement to the end liberally dealt out the wine to many thousands of persons; "So that," says the above-mentioned rector, "the cask ought to have been emptied, even had it contained not seven or eight, but twenty or thirty barrels, and yet when the mission was brought to a close, there was found a large quantity of wine still remaining. This fact," (adds the rector, who confirms it with his oath), "filled every one with wonder, particularly the said Giovanni, and I, more astonished than the rest, know not to what I may attribute it, except to a manifest miracle of the goodness and mercy of God, who wished thus to animate the people to frequent these blessed missions, from which continually result wonderful conversions, reformation of manners, reconciliations, and an infinitude of other blessings." When the gamblers, with a resolution to amend their lives, brought to Father Segneri the cards, to make a sacrifice of them to God, he used to give them in memory of their good resolutions a medal, blessed by the Pope, to which was attached a plenary indulgence at the hour of death; but at the same time cautioned them never to return to gambling, otherwise they might lose their medal, And indeed, this was no vain threat of the father, for very many have attested, that returning to cards, they lost without ever knowing how, the medal which they held most dear, and had preserved with the utmost caution. A priest among others declares of himself upon oath, that to preclude all possibility of losing his medal, he sewed it up within the

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belt of his trowsers, and having on one occasion only taken to cards, he found the medal missing, though the belt remained quite entire, and in no part had become unsewn.

It is incredible in how many ways the infernal enemy attempted to disturb the proceedings of the missions, and he would certainly have succeeded, had not the all-powerful hand of God continually rendered fruitless his perverse designs. In the territory of Ozola in Lombardy, as soon as the discourse had commenced, an immense stone, becoming detached, (no one knew how), from a wall, rolled here and there for a short time among the crowded audience, until of its own accord it broke into several parts. At this sight a universal cry of alarm burst forth, and the people ran about on all sides, almost out of their minds with fear: then Father Segneri, after a short pause said, "The devil wishes then to disturb this holy exercise, he may bark, but he cannot bite;" and this expression, as if coming from heaven, immediately quelled the tumult, and the father continued his discourse, without meeting with any further molestation. One day during the mission at Santa Vittoria, which is not far from Fermo, one of the usual exercises was about to take place in a public square, but as the square was not sufficiently large to contain the great mass of people, many of them mounted the roofs of the surrounding houses. On this occasion many stones fell down, each weighing not less than about eight pounds, and though every one certainly expected that some lamentable accident

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must occur among the crowded people, yet no one met with the slightest injury from it. In the diocese of Mantua, there was a large trench about eighteen feet broad and thirty deep, which served as a receptacle for the rain. Now as the people had to pass in a body over it for the exercise of the mission, a temporary bridge was constructed of beams and branches of trees; but proving unable to support the great weight, it gave way, and more than twenty-five persons fell one upon the other into the trench. A pitiful wail arose from the bystanders, for they thought that many of them would be found lamed, and some even dead; but the lamentation was presently turned into sounds of gladness and praises to God, for they were all drawn out from the depth of the trench alive and unhurt, as if they had but fallen on a bed of soft feathers.

Whilst Father Segneri was giving a mission in a small town named Trave, within the diocese of Piacenza, the river Trebbia, which flows near it, was much swollen by reason of the rain; but notwithstanding this many fervent souls failed not to attend to the sacred duties of the mission. Wishing towards evening to return home, they found the river very much increased, yet many succeeded in crossing in different boats; and as the sun was now setting, and all were anxious not to be left the last, about thirty persons got into the boat together, and loaded it to such an extent, that not being able to bear the weight of the burden, or withstand the force of the current, it was in great danger of being upset. What increased

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the danger was, that the boatman, seeing the desperate state of affairs, thought it the best plan to abandon the oars, and leave the bark to the chance of fortune; and in the confusion that ensued, a poor child that was calmly reposing in the bosom of its mother, fell overboard into the water. The spectators on the banks, unable to render these unfortunate creatures any assistance, ran in haste to acquaint Father Segneri with their wretched condition. The father had now retired to his room after the fatigue of preaching, and on hearing the sad news, overwhelmed with grief, hastened to his oratory, and there with tender lamentations recommended to God the safety of those, who in so holy a cause had thus exposed themselves to this great danger. At the same time the boat, which had been carried along by the current, struck against a little sand bank in the middle of the river, and a number of beasts of burthen were brought from the land, and all in turn had the means of putting themselves in safety. But the most wonderful thing was, that the child, after being borne down the stream about two hundred paces, was found alive, uninjured and smiling, and was restored to the happy mother with universal joy.*

Still more frequently was the divine protection visible in appeasing storms, so that during such a number of years, it was scarcely ever necessary to interrupt the accustomed exercises. Giuseppe

* The facts recorded in this and the preceding paragraph, are attested on oath by a priest who was present.

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Bianchini, a priest of Piacenza, who, with incomparable zeal followed Father Segneri a long time in the missions, relates that he has seen a great many prodigies of this kind. Once in the city of Carpis, during the sermon which was preached in the open air before the walls of the city, the sky became overclouded, and a violent storm seemed hanging overhead, and the audience, who amounted to many thousands, filled with alarm, all wished to withdraw: the Father, however, encouraged them, saying they need not fear, and desired every one to remain in his place. Then, raising his eyes to heaven, he blessed the storm with the sign of the cross, and during the whole time that the sermon lasted, though it rained excessively all round about, the place in which the audience were standing, remained perfectly dry; so that they appeared as if they were in the ark of Noe in the midst of the deluge. Their astonishment was still further increased, when, after the sermon, as soon as the people had retired, there poured a torrent of rain on the very spot, which caused a complete flood.* In the territory ofBrescia, they were about to arrange the penitential procession, when the heavens became darkened, and as the rain already began to fall, every one was of opinion that it would be impossible to proceed, but Father Segneri, standing at the door of the church, and raising a fervent sigh to heaven, said, "This is the work of the devil; therefore let the procession begin, all will turn out

* This is proved by the attestations on oath of a canon, three priests, and a layman.

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well." And the result was conformable with the words of the Father. In an instant the rain ceased until the procession was brought to a close, and when the people had retired to their homes, it fell in copious streams.* Another time, in the midst of a sermon in the open country, there suddenly burst from a black cloud a shower of hailstones, as large as walnuts, and the audience, having no place wherein to take shelter, had recourse to the Father, to assist them in this great danger. With an intrepid countenance, and his soul fixed on God, he began to rouse their drooping spirits. He blessed the air, and the hail ceased, the storm instantly vanished.†

That also was a remarkable prodigy which happened in Frassinoro, and is mentioned in the printed account in Modena. In the month of August, when the sun was in the sign of the Lion, the last sermon after the penitential procession was on the point of being given; and as the country is all open, there was no place adapted for the purpose, but a slight hill, exposed to the scorching rays of the sun. There the people, already exhausted by the previous devotions, would undoubtedly have suffered severely, from remaining so long under the influence of the excessive heat of the weather; but scarcely had they seated themselves, when a wonderful cloud arose suddenly from the horizon, and moving along until it came in front of the sun, kept it veiled during the whole

* A doctor of medicine confirms this on oath.

† This is attested by a priest.

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time of the sermon ; when that was finished, and the benediction given, it immediately dispersed, leaving every one astonished with the loving goodness of our Lord, who was thus pleased to give such an evident sign of the delight he took in the fervour of these his faithful servants. It was observed also as a very singular favour of God, that in these numerous congregations, and in such an indiscriminate mixture of people from various countries, there was never known any one to meet with his death from quarrels or hatred, nor even any serious wound, disorders which are very commonly witnessed in such kinds of assemblies, and very difficult to be avoided.

But to render illustrious in a more immediate manner, not so much the labours, as the person of his beloved minister, the Divine clemency vouchsafed to communicate to him the virtue of curing many kinds of diseases. I find a great number of these cures attested, but for brevity's sake I pass them over, contenting myself with mentioning some few. Signor Baldassar Saverio Catanco, son of the prince of S. Nicandro, affirms upon his oath, that being at the Riviera di Genova in the month of September, 1668, he was attacked by a dreadful disease, which brought him to the very verge of death, and he was now despaired of by the physicians. Father Segneri, who was at the time engaged in a mission there, being requested to visit him, courteously consented, and found him in so alarming a state that he was unable to receive from him any answer to his questions. Having spent some time on his knees in prayer,

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he then made the sign of the cross on his throat with the relics of S. Francis Xavier, as was his custom on all such occasions, in order to secure the patronage of this great saint for the obtaining of the desired favour, and to avoid all shadow of vain-glory, which might sully the purity of his most upright intentions. The Father now left the house, and the sick man became better; and the following morning, when the physicians returned, they found the fever gone, the inflammation on the throat entirely subsided, and the patient restored to health, to their great astonishment.

At Solarola there was a young man who had altogether lost his sight, and he was brought to Father Segneri that he might make the sign of the cross upon him, and bless him. It was much against the Father's inclinations to consent to these actions; but as he wished to console the unfortunate man, who had come a long distance to see him, he signed him with the relics of S. Francis Xavier, and took his leave. After some days, the youth having recovered his sight, returned again full of joy to thank his benefactor; but as the Father turned his back upon him, and feigned not to see him, the young man cried out still more loudly; and continued to run after him with gestures and words expressive of his humble gratitude.

This fact becoming known, numbers of persons flocked to the Father to receive his blessing, and to be signed in the same manner; which gave him great uneasiness, and from that time forward

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he was much more reserved in yielding to such requests, excusing himself by saying, that he came to cure their souls, and not their bodies. Signor Mari' Antonio Montaguti, an eminent physician of the city of Parma, relates the following, and makes a sworn deposition of it. "Being," he says, "in the Finale di Modena, at the time Father Paul Segneri, of the Society of Jesus, was preaching a mission there, and being afflicted with a grievous disorder in the head, and which gave me excessive pain, and had now continued upon me more than a year, with such severity that I could not bear to have my head covered, I ventured to go one day out into a meadow without the Finale, where this mission was going on, clothed in woollen garments, according to the custom of the Society of the Sacred Stigmata erected in the city of Modena. I stood in that dress for about the space of two hours, with my head covered the whole of the time. After the mission was concluded I went to the parish church of the Finale, and the same Father blessed me, and made over my head the sign of the cross with the relics of S. Francis Xavier; at that very instant I felt as it were a wind blowing over my head, and I found myself suddenly freed from the pain in my head, which has never returned to this day." These are his express words.

Signor Giovanni Gaudino, a physician of Quinzano, in the territory of Brescia, testifies on oath how he was sent for in great haste to attend a boy who had been thrown to the ground by a violent attack of apoplexy, and finding that his pulse

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had ceased to beat, and he no longer breathed, he feared that the case was beyond remedy. Presently Father Segneri made his appearance, and having given his blessing to the boy, called upon him loudly by name ; and by this simple call the dying youth was brought to his senses, opened his eyes, and as if awaking from a deep sleep, was quite cured.

Don Giovanni Baptista Seroglieri, a priest of Parma, deposes, that in the town of Sorbolo, his native place, he was troubled with painful humours in his legs, which, breaking out into a violent erysipelas, caused him great smarting and torture, so that he could hardly walk a single step across his room, though supported by two sticks. In this lamentable condition, at the request of the arch-priest, his uncle, he was visited by Father Segneri, who was at the time there engaged in the apostolic labours. The Father sprinkled him with holy water, then exhorted him to have confidence in the glorious merits of S. Francis Xavier, and touched him with the relics of that Saint, which he invariably carried about with him. Immediately the sick man was entirely freed from all pain, and from that time he began and continued to walk quickly, just as he had done before he was visited with that severe malady.

Signora Ginlia Albani Olevieri, aunt of the present reigning Pontiff, in a document signed with her own handwriting, speaks thus: "I, the undersigned, testify upon oath, that Monsignor Membrini, Bishop of Parma, related

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to me the following fact, which happened in that his diocese, where Father Paul Segneri, of the Society of Jesus, had given the holy missions with the universal reputation of a saint." A poor man, wishing to split a beam of wood, struck a blow with the hatchet with such violence, that the instrument, passing through the wood, pierced his leg, and separated the bone in such a manner, that one part of the wounded member adhered to the other by nothing more than the simple skin. Father Segneri was at hand, and, moved with compassion for the suffering man, who was writhing with pain, he closed to the best of his power the two parts of the leg, bound a bandage round the leg, and made over it the sign of the cross. The leg was afterwards unbandaged, and, if I recollect aright, this took place on the following day, or, at any rate, thereabouts, and the wounded limb was found entire and healed, with the bone united and strengthened; which was looked upon by all as a great and evident miracle."

Not only had Father Segneri received the grace of working these wonders in person, but even the things which he possessed partook of a similar power, and sufficed for the accomplishment of the most stupendous effects. In the territory of Quinzano, which was mentioned a little above, a lady, by name Bartolomea Gandaglia, who had been for many months labouring under a most violent sciatica, to her great good fortune obtained a linen cloth which the father had used for wiping off the perspiration and blood from

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his body after the penitential exercises. This cloth she tied round her thigh, before composing herself to sleep, and after one or two nights she was perfectly cured, and never afterwards felt the least return of her pains.* Donna Maria Vincenza Sgariglia, a professed nun of the order of S. Benedict, in the convent of San Onofrio, in the city of Ascoli, had for a long time endured a strange misfortune in both her thumbs; for they had become so stiff, that she not only was unable to stretch them out at all, but, moreover, suffered an excessive spasm. She had recourse to the surgeon, who, among other attempts, applied essence of amber, which he considered a most efficacious remedy; nothing, however, afforded her any relief, but, on the other hand, her case continually grew worse, until God wished to console her by means of Father Segneri, who was at that time staying in Ascoli for the purposes of the missions. On the feast of S. Bartholomew, the father came to the church of the convent to celebrate mass, and the good religious besought the sacristan to preserve for her the water in which he washed his hands. Having obtained this water, she drank a portion of it through devotion, and begged our Lord, that through the merits of his servant, the thumb of her right hand might be cured, that she might be able to administer to her own wants and those of the house; that in regard to the left thumb, as it was less necessary, she protested that she was

* The physician of the place attests to the truth of it.

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not concerned, and even prayed God to leave it in its present state for the exercise of her patience, and as some atonement for her sins. Having said this, she inserted her hands into the water, and, suddenly, the thumb of the right hand became free and perfectly healed, while the other continued to be useless and painful as before. Thus she testifies upon oath, and her statement is confirmed by three other nuns of the most undoubted authority in the same convent, who speak of it as a thing well known among them; and they add that six years after this time the good religious still continued in the same state.

Signor Giacomo Maffei, in an authentic form, testifies to the following fact, which happened in the city of Mantova, in the person of Signora Barbara Zanetta, his lady, five years after the passage of Father Paul to a better life; our Lord being thus pleased to glorify his servant even after his death. Signora Barbara, he relates, was taken ill on the 14th of September, in the year 1699, of a double tertian fever of a violent nature, and considerable fears were entertained for her life, in consideration of her age, she having then completed her sixty-sixth year, when, on the twentieth of the same month, that is, about the seventh day of her infirmity, I felt myself in the morning inspired by God to have recourse to the intercession of Father Paul Segneri, and to avail myself of a linen napkin which had been soaked with his blood, and was preserved in my house. He had lived here whilst he was engaged with a mission in the village of Cerese, and had procured

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the napkin to wipe his body after the penitential procession, during which he scourged himself with an effusion of blood, which completely soaked the napkin in question. With this I approached the bed of Signora Barbara, and thus addressed her: "Signora Barbara, this, as you well know, is the napkin made use of by Father Segneri in the mission of Cerese, when he was living in our house: recommend yourself to God and to the most Blessed Virgin Mary, that by the intercession of this father, who died with the reputation of sanctity, you may be delivered from this infirmity." Then holding in my hand the napkin, and making the sign of the cross over Signora Barbara, I said these words: "Per merita passionis D. N. Jesu Christi, et beatissimæ Virginis Mariæ, per intercessionem Patris Pauli Segneri, liberet te Deus, ab hac febre, sive infirmitate. Amen." I then gave the napkin to her, and exhorted her again to recommend herself to God and to our Blessed Lady, by saying a Pater and an Ave, reanimating her faith, and hoping that by means of the intercession of Father Paul Segneri, she might be freed from her present evil. And so indeed it happened, for on the day mentioned above, the seventh of her infirmity, she not only escaped the fit, which, in the ordinary course of the malady, should have come upon her, but when the physician came to see her, he found her altogether free from fever, at which he was not a little astonished, and said that this recovery was too sudden and could not be lasting; but when he learned from me the remedy which I had

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applied, he wished to see the napkin, and having seen it, said that it might serve as a sacred relic. The improvement of the patient continued, nor did she ever feel a return of the fever. This is affirmed as true by Signor Giacomo Maffei, whose account is strengthened by the testimony of Signor Carlo Martinelli, who, in quality of physician, attended the said lady in her sickness.

Nor was this the last of these extraordinary ways by which our Lord glorified the person of him who studied so zealously to propagate His divine glory. Signor Abbate Vajani, canon of the venerable Basilica of S. Maria Maggiore, relates, that when Father Segneri was preaching in the public square of Modigliana in Romagna, there came a violent storm, which obliged the people to withdraw in the best manner they could to shelter. The Father was preaching on a raised platform, in the very centre of the square, with nothing but his simple habit on his back, and his beretta on his head; and though the rain poured in torrents from the skies, yet he, firm and motionless, continued his discourse, and afterwards, without drying himself or anything else, he made his way in haste to the Church of S. Bernard, situated in front of the same square. The forementioned Abbate and Signor Nicholo Borghi, who had been standing by, and had kept their eyes constantly fixed on Father Segneri, felt great compassion for him, as they thought he must have been drenched by the rain from head to foot: but when they approached near to him, they observed that he was perfectly dry, and that not even the hair of

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his head had been touched by the rain. They looked at one another with astonishment, and then to certify themselves of the truth, they both wished to touch his garment with their hands, and they found that it was really quite dry, as if there had not been a drop of rain. A religious bears testimony on oath, that she has twice seen the countenance of Father Segneri all glowing with brightness, whilst he was saying Mass. In like manner a priest solemnly swears that, having met with Father Segneri, and entered into conversation with him, in one of the courts of our college, he saw the countenance of the Father surrounded with an abundance of celestial rays.

Don Giovanni Piatoni, curate in Codugno, of the Vicariate of Val di Taro, within the diocese of Piacenza, relates and swears to the truth of it, that in the month of August, 1673, he set out from Val di Taro in company with two hundred and fifty persons, who walked in procession the whole night, a distance of twenty-four miles, in order to arrive the following morning at Fornuovo, where the general communion was to be given at the conclusion of a mission held there by Father Segneri. They were graciously received by the Father, and having performed their devotions, assembled in the afternoon for the usual penitential procession, and to hear the last discourse. A very crowded audience had collected, and I, says the priest in question, that I might hear the better, stationed myself in a position pretty near to the Father. When his fervour had been raised to the highest pitch, I began to see the counten-

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ance of Father Segneri all resplendent, and rays of light issuing from it on all sides. Doubting whether I might not be deceived, I fixed my eyes several times upon him more intently than at first, and at every time that blessed face was represented to me encircled with a bright splendour, which obliged me to lay aside all doubts as to the reality of the appearance; and thus I was considerably confirmed in the opinion I had already formed of the sanctity of the Father. This opinion I had drawn from the two missions he had given in those parts, with an amount of benefit to souls, beyond all that can be imagined by any one who was not witness to it. Such is his testimony. Still better fortune had Father Giovanbattista Perfetta, Professor and Preacher of the order of the Minims of S. Francis of Paula, who found Father Segneri in the act of praying; but the fact shall be here related in his own words, which were publicly and authentically recorded before Monsignor the bishop of Borgo S. Dominico. He attests, that having not only had some knowledge of the late Father Paul Segneri, of the Society of Jesus, and missionary, but having also laboured with him in many places, and followed him in different missions, among the many good works which he saw him accomplish, whether in converting numberless sinners from carnal vices, by bringing them to know the wretched state of damnation in which they were living, and to bewail in public their miserable condition, and publicly to ask pardon of God, approaching without delay to confession, and becoming reconciled to

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their blessed Lord, or in reconciling innumerable enemies, he also frequently observed the said Father Paul in the evening discipline his naked flesh; and this, not only with great effusion of blood, but even so that pieces of flesh were torn from his body, and flew up into the air. Yet when he saw him the next day uncover his shoulders to repeat this cruel scourging, there was visible no mark whatever, nor any wound from the previous flagellation. But what is still more wonderful, adds this same Father, I happened to be in the town of Mazzenzatico, in the diocese of Reggio, where Father Paul was engaged in the missions, (and it is now about twenty years ago,) towards the commencement of summer; and whilst Father Paul was retired in one of the rooms of the house belonging to the canons of that church, and I in another apartment, not far distant from that of the Father, I heard him distinctly at two different times sighing heavily. The door of his room was partly open, and I, approaching with a lighted candle, beheld within, for there was a light burning there also, Father Paul, raised from the floor about the height of four palms, engaged in prayer on his knees, with his arms and hands extended in the form of a cross. After watching him in this position for some time, I went and called Don Paolo Fretta, then curate of that church, informing him of the state in which I had seen Father Paul. The curate accompanied me to the door, and saw, likewise, by means of his spectacles, which he applied to his eyes, for he was very old, Father Paul in an ecstasy, raised from the floor in the

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manner before mentioned, and I too again beheld him: and this position continued during the whole time that we made these observations, which could not be less than a quarter or half an hour. When Signor D. Paolo witnessed this, he began to shed an abundance of tears, and I joined my tears with his. Approaching the door again, I remarked that Father Paul had now descended, and was kneeling on the floor, and I observed that in the room, and in the place where Father Paul was, there was no support or anything which could possibly have sustained him in that position. Thus he relates this fact.

God is accustomed to reserve for His most intimate friends the favour of seeing afar off distant events, and of penetrating the secrets of hearts. With this grace it seems to have been His will to have favoured Father Segneri; and I could here bring forward many proofs of this, but two only will suffice. A religious, in a document written entirely with her own hand, relates that Father Segneri, after recovering from a certain attack of sickness, came to visit one of the sacred virgins who was sick in the community to which she belonged. Now whilst Father Segneri was discoursing with this infirm nun, the religious who deposes to the fact, was kneeling at the foot of the bed, and turning towards the father, thought within herself, "Oh! how happy should I be, if I could have the good fortune to be assisted at my death by a man so acceptable to God!" Upon this Father Segneri, addressing her with a most benignant countenance, said in

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a low voice, "What is it you are now thinking about?" and she, not daring to manifest her secret, replied, "I am thinking that your reverence has soon recovered from his sickness." "It is not so," returned he, with a still more placid smile than before, "you shall be consoled; I will assist you in whatsoever manner you desire." The religious was astonished at this reply, for she had never said any thing to the father on such things, whereby he might conjecture her secret thoughts; and she was at the same time filled with such intense joy, that when the father took his leave, she poured forth abundance of holy tears. But she began to reflect that Father Segneri was already advanced in years, and that in a short time he would set out, never again perhaps to return to that country. "If, however," she said within herself, "he has to assist at my death, this must of necessity be not far off." After some days the father returned to visit these same religious, and the one in question meeting him, said, "Well, Father Segneri, shall I be the first to depart this life?" and the father assuming a serious look, as if gently reproving her, answered, "I did not say this; I only say that I will assist you in whatever manner you wish:" and it appears that he meant by this to assure her that even though he were dead, he would render her his assistance from Paradise. The lady Giulia Albani Olivieri records the following case, which she says upon oath was related to her by Monsignor Membrini, Bishop of Parma. A certain woman came to confession

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to Father Segneri, and having exposed some of her sins, said she could recollect no more. Father Paul exhorted her several times to examine her conscience better, but she still persisted in saying she could not remember anything more. He then asked her what she had concealed in that dunghill or heap of earth behind her house. At this question, the wretched woman, perceiving that she was detected in a matter of the most profound secrecy, and known to herself alone, and which could not be penetrated by others without a light superior to that of man, loaded with confusion, confessed to the father that she had buried in that place a child, the fruit of iniquity, and had never dared to disclose her guilt not even to her confessor, through fear that from his ears it might pass to those of the prince, and she herself be severely punished. On hearing this, Father Paul disposed the woman to true repentance, and gained her over to God, promising moreover that in case of need he would obtain from the prince a pardon for her great crimes, as in fact he did.

The most illustrious Monsignor Fadulfi, Bishop of Ascoli, in a letter to our father penitentiary of Loretto, attests in verbo veritatis, that whilst Father Segneri was engaged with the missions in that city, happened the death of Pope Innocent XI. of glorious memory; and scarcely had the intelligence reached Ascoli, when this worthy prelate, in conversation with the father, as is customary on such occasions, on the subject of the vacant See, and the person who should succeed the deceased Pontiff, named several cardinals,

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who, more worthy than the rest, were proclaimed by the common voice as the most likely. "No," said Father Segneri, "Ottoboni, Ottoboni will be Pope; he has distinguished himself in an eminent manner on affairs regarding the Holy See." Then remaining a short time thoughtful and silent, he added, "And then Pignatelli." Such is the fact, and we have seen that both the one and the other of these predictions were verified. However, I leave it to each one's consideration whether human prudence alone could enable Father Segneri to predict so long before things of such an abstruse and uncertain nature, which confound the minds of even the greatest politicians; especially when we consider that he lived for so many years at a distance from Rome, entirely occupied in his holy labours, and could not know the dispositions and workings of that court.

CHAPTER VI.

FATHER SEGNERI IS WITHDRAWN FROM HIS MISSIONS BY THE POPE TO ROME. HIS EMPLOYMENTS THERE, AND DEATH.

Such was the life led by Father Paul Segneri for twenty-six years in his apostolic missions, which he used to commence immediately after Easter, continuing his labours from that time until about November. In this manner he went through and sanctified the dioceses of Lucca,

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Piacenza, Faenza, Modena, Parma, Mantova, Reggio, Nonantola, Carpi, Arezzo, Bologna, Pescia, Genova, Albenga, Ancona, and Serzana. In some of these dioceses he preached from one end to the other more than once, besides those of Brescia, Lodi, Fermo, Sinigaglia, Savona, Bertinoro, and Ventimiglia, which he visited merely in parts. With regard to large cities, he generally had not much inclination to give missions there; for he thought his labours were better employed in villages and country places, as they are commonly worse provided with help, and on that account standing in greater need of it. However, in the following cities he always reaped the most abundant fruits from his missions, viz., Ancona, Pistoja, Fermo, Sinigaglia, Gubbio, Serzano, Albenga, and particularly the most noble city of Bologna, which certainly here merits an especial mention, on account of the unexampled crowds who attended, and the singular piety and fervour of all classes of persons displayed in every particular. Hence this city may serve as a signal example to all others; and persons acquainted with the history of Bologna, say that this mission may with justice be compared to that ever celebrated one given in past ages in this city by the great apostle of Italy, S. Bernardine of Sienna.

When he had concluded the circle of the missions, Father Segneri retired for the remainder of the year to one of the colleges of the society, and it nearly always fell out that our college at Florence had the honour of receiving him. His repose there was that of composing, for the

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general profit of souls, those precious volumes which we enjoy, and which have been printed frequently in many places, and translated into several European languages. These volumes undoubtedly cost the author much labour. He himself informs us that he used to spend about eight hours a day in his studies; and this will be no matter of surprise to those who know with what elegance of style his writings were composed, and with what a mass of erudition and learning they abounded. On one occasion God seems to have assisted his labours in an extraordinary manner, when Father Segneri was engaged in the composition of the work on the agreement between the prayer of quiet and active prayer. The father was himself astonished at the facility with which the ideas poured into his mind. If he opened books to seek for any text, he immediately found the passage in question, so that he recognised a particular assistance of our Lord, who, in that undertaking, wished to make use of him for the salvation of many souls. To the toils of the missions and of composition, the father did not omit to add those of preaching, exerting his zeal and eloquence during Lent in various churches where his labours were eagerly requested; and this practice he continued until the year 1679, when he published his noble course of sermons for Lent, to be preached to the whole world at the same time.

But in the middle of these holy occupations, in which he exercised himself with great delight to his soul, an unexpected command arrived at

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Florence, calling him to Rome. The occasion of this summons was as follows: "His Holiness, Pope Innocent XII., having read some of the works of this author, and hearing such great things related of his zeal, of the veneration in which he was held by the people, and the wonderful fruits which everywhere resulted from his fervent missions, began to reflect, that such a man would be a very fit subject for the important office of preacher in his pontifical palace, to the sacred college of cardinals, and to the prelates. Having, therefore, expressed his desire to the superiors of the society, they, with ready obedience, wrote to the father, enjoining him to come as soon as possible, in obedience to the orders of the pope, and enter upon the duty which his Holiness had pleased to destine for him. This intelligence, so honourable in itself, would have been to many most agreeable, and have afforded them no small delight, but to Father Segneri it was as a thunderstroke: for his humility made him esteem himself unfit for such an exalted situation, and his charity could not endure the pain of being thus torn from his beloved missions, which were the principal subject of his affections. He lamented bitterly before God, and fervently entreated our superiors; but they remaining firm in the command already given, it was necessary for the poor father to sacrifice to obedience all the repugnance he felt, though this was so strong, that the person who accompanied him on this journey has assured us, that during the whole time, he scarcely did anything else but weep and

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deplore his lot. Arriving at Rome about the beginning of the Lent of 1692, he went immediately to kiss the feet of the sovereign Pontiff, and urged all that his eloquence could suggest to be freed from this appointment. However, his excuses served only to increase the desire of the pope to listen to a man in whom he found the most religious virtues so beautifully united with the rarest talents. His Holiness received him with tokens of particular benevolence, and exhorted him to embrace with joy the office for the benefit of that court, on which depended, in a great measure, the happy progress of christianity in all parts. Thus Father Segneri, compelled, in submission to the Vicar of Christ, to spread his nets, composed and delivered the two last sermons of that Lent in this august theatre, which, without any fear of exaggeration, may be called the most venerable in all Christendom. He continued to preach there during the whole of Advent and the following Lent, with universal praise for the solidity and judgment displayed in his arguments, the power of his reasoning, and the happy selection of ideas, which were equally grand and profitable. The pope, above all others, expressed his high satisfaction of the new preacher, and went so far as to say, that he could listen to him for whole hours without feeling any weariness. Once being prevented by sickness from attending one of the sermons, he commanded one of the prelates of his household to pay particular attention to the sermon, and afterwards repeat it to him just as it was delivered. But his Holi-

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ness extended his kindness to Father Segneri much further, admitting him frequently, and sending for him to hold long and confidential audiences, entrusting to him many affairs of great importance, favouring him with frequent and noble presents, and showing him so many other marks of his affection, that it laid the foundation to the opinion in the court, that his Holiness intended to raise him to the most exalted point of honour which the head of the church can confer.

In this prosperous state of affairs, the humble father allowed no shade of vain-glory to enter his heart, nor permitted himself to be flattered by this favourable breath of fortune, but he continued always the same as before, far removed from the slightest degree of pride, respectful and affectionate towards all, sincere in his conversation, and looking only to the service of the pope and the greater glory of God. Hence, when either the one or the other required it, he not only never refrained from saying and doing such things as, according to the ordinary rules of the prudence of this world, would destroy all hopes of his future promotion, but even studiously set them forth with great vigour and zeal, knowing well that he could never render himself agreeable to the heart of God, as long as he pretended to please, even in the least degree, himself or any other creature. We need not wonder, then, that the good father, embued with such holy maxims, even at the height of these favours of the court, sighed continually after his cherished missions, so that he

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has been more than once heard to say, "The greatest favour that I could receive from the pope, would be to obtain permission to return to my beloved missions. Oh! how speedily would I then leave Rome without a moment's delay!" In conformity with this sentiment, he assured a confidential friend of his by letter, that since he had been removed from his holy missions, he had not enjoyed a single day of pleasure. He also confessed to many, that he never allowed a day to pass without shedding abundance of tears on this account; and there are not wanting witnesses to attest that they have seen him weep bitterly, attributing the misfortune of his removal to his own sins, which rendered him unworthy of so happy lot.

On the fifteenth of December of that year, 1692, occurred at Rome the death of Father Nicolo Maria Pallavicino, of the Society of Jesus, theologian of the sacred penitentiary, and examiner of bishops. No sooner was the intelligence conveyed to his holiness, than by a motu proprio, he conferred both these appointments upon Father Segneri, who went to render the thanks that were due, but at the same time begged him to bestow the vacant offices upon some person of greater merit; saying that he was by no means a theologian fit to serve the sacred penitentiary; and that in consequence of the defect in his hearing he would not be able to examine the bishops with becoming dignity in presence of his holiness himself, and so many cardinals and prelates who attended on those occasions. The Pope listened to the humble ex-

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cuses of the Father, but knowing very well how perfectly skilled he was in all points of theology, though he had never occupied a professorship, in that faculty he obliged him to accept the office of Theologian. As to the other, of examining bishops, he expressed himself satisfied with the excuse alleged, and was therefore induced to accept of it. On this occasion, Father Segneri made bold to repeat his entreaties before his holiness, which he had made several times before, that after the approaching Lent he might be relieved from the duty of preaching in the palace; declaring that his age, now far advanced, and his memory, which was beginning to fail him, rendered this burthen far above his declining strength. It was much against his will that the Pope could deprive himself of the profit and pleasure he derived from these sermons, but moved by compassion, he at length condescended to grant the request: however, he required that the Father should propose one whom he considered fit to succeed him in the office of preacher, and the person suggested by the Father was immediately promoted by his holiness. The same thing happened in supplying the place of examiner of the bishops; no other was elected to that appointment but the one nominated by the Father himself. Thus Father Segneri, retained at Rome by such strong bonds, began to exercise his new ministry as Theologian of the Penitentiary, and assisted his holiness in all matters which from time to time were proposed to him, though his more familiar, and by far more delightful occupations, were the penitential aus-

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terities which he practised, and his almost continual custom of communing with God by prayer; of which we shall speak at some length in its place.

But partly owing to the unsettled state of his mind, and to this new method of life without, the agitation of body to which he had been accustomed for so many years in the missions, he was, in course of time, assailed by a grievous malady, which brought him to the last extremity, and eventually took away his life. In the month of July, 1694, a great weakness of stomach came over him, with violent pains, a great bitterness in the palate, excessive thirst, and a total want of appetite, and loathing for food; accordingly, the charity of the superiors applied such remedies as were considered opportune, but as he profited little from the skill of the medical art, the physician determined to try if change of air could afford him any greater relief. Judging that of Tivoli to be the most salubrious, he was accordingly, with the full consent of the Pope and the cardinal penitentiary, transferred to that place about the middle of September, and remained in our college there until the end of October. On his return to Rome, it was remarked that his body was much swollen, his colour pale and yellow, that he had a great difficulty in breathing, and had suffered a considerable diminution in strength; so that they had recourse more than ever to medicinal remedies, though there appeared but little hopes of being able to overcome the obstinacy of the disease, which had penetrated into his

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veins, and mingled with his blood. Now our superiors, seeing the imminent danger they were in of losing shortly a subject of such inestimable worth, and not content with the opinion and advice of one physician alone, desired that some of the most eminent in Rome should consult together on the case. Father Segneri, who always showed himself quite unconcerned about his indispositions, and who, the more he was esteemed by others, had the less opinion of himself, for some time objected to their using such extraordinary care in his regard; but he was at length obliged to yield to the resolute will of those who were placed over him. As the more severe season was now at hand, the physicians agreed that he should go to Albano for a few days, and then on to Nettuno, to enjoy the benefit of that sweet and native air. Having obtained the necessary permission as before, his first thoughts were about the holy Mass; and he therefore had recourse to Signor cardinal Albani, then secretary of briefs, praying him that, in consideration of his infirmity, he would be pleased to obtain from the Pope permission for him to celebrate Mass, and cause it to be celebrated in a private Oratory in the house. But he made this request with a thousand reservations and protestations, and with the most profound humility, declaring that if the entreaty seemed to his eminence at all unreasonable, he by no means wished to urge it, and rather than do so, he would prefer to live without the consolation of saying Mass, though he desired it with such intense ardour. His holiness, who from the first

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had shewn an intense solicitude for the health of the Father, and who continued to the last to afford him various testimonies of his favour, graciously consented to whatever he desired; and he granted it in a most singular manner, without sending any brief at all: moreover, being informed that the Father desired, before he set out from Rome, to present himself at the feet of his holiness, he afforded him the means of coming without inconvenience, as he had likewise done on a previous occasion, when he was proceeding to Albano.

But whilst Father Segneri was preparing for this journey, our Lord was pleased to call him to the more blessed journey to heaven. On the 7th of December, his malady suddenly took a most decided turn for the worse, so that the poor Father was seized with frequent vomitings, fainting fits, and certain convulsive emotions, accompanied with the most acute pains; and for my part, I think that these were the last purifications which God wished to make of that beloved soul. The Fathers of the house, perceiving that he was wasting away every moment, thought it prudent to inform him of his approaching death. He had already expressed the manner in which this information should be conveyed, when, at the very beginning of his sickness, he wrote in a book belonging to the infirmary the following words: "Formula, by which you shall admonish Father N. N. of his death. Rejoice now, my Father; the hour is come when you will no longer offend God." Thus Father Segneri, who, for such a noble motive desired death, and who in an entire

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sermon of his course for Lent, taught how we should receive this fatal sentence from the hands of God, at the first announcement of this news, looking affectionately up to heaven, without being in the least disturbed, pronounced with a placid smile these generous words of our Saviour, Calicem quem dedit mihi Pater, non vis ut bibam illum? The following morning, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, he received in bed the most holy communion in honour of the ever-blessed Virgin, and offered himself entirely as a holocaust to the divine will. Towards afternoon his pains greatly increased, and he begged for the holy Viaticum, but as he had communicated only a few hours before, it was not deemed prudent to give it to him. Deprived of this celestial nourishment, he endeavoured to supply for it by devout affections, and though according to his custom, he kept these shut up within the secret of his own heart, yet it was not possible for him to restrain himself so far that some few of them should not escape his lips: and among the ejaculatory aspirations which proceeded from his mouth, there was in particular the following, Benedicam Domino in omni tempore, semper laus ejus in ore meo: and he repeated time after time the word, semper, semper, semper, with such devotion as to move all the bystanders to tears. With equal fervour was he heard to pronounce this other aspiration, Abyssus abyssum invocat; abyssus miseriæ invocat abyssum misericordiæ: words taken from the mellifluous S. Bernard, who thus comments on that part of the Psalm.

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And now Father Felix Barnabei, who had been the companion of Father Segneri, went in haste to acquaint the Pope with the condition of the sick man. His Holiness causing him to be immediately introduced, questioned him on many particulars, and finding that there was now no room for hope, exclaimed, "Oh, what an affliction! what an affliction! he was a holy man, he was an angel, he was an angel, he was an angel!" and commissioned the father to carry back to him his name, his pontifical benediction, which the dying man received with wonderful delight and reverence. Signor Cardinal Albani, now Supreme Pontiff, under the name of Clement XI., who had been affectionately attached to Father Segneri from his very boyhood, and had frequently honoured him with his presence during this sickness, understanding that he was now at the last extremity, was anxious to take leave of him, and recommend himself to his prayers. As soon as his eminence presented himself before him, the father, speaking of his death with astonishing calmness, as if he were going to a place of recreation, said, "Signor Cardinale, the other day we were discussing the journey from Albano to Nettuno; now I have another journey to make, and am on my way to the other life. Does your Eminence require nothing of me? What can I do to serve you in the other world?" That learned man was much edified to see how tranquilly the good father looked forward to that great event, which even the most holy persons are accustomed to view with dread; in accordance with his piety

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he merely besought the dying father to intercede for him before God for the pardon of his sins, and for grace to comply faithfully with the weighty obligations of his sacred dignity. The following day, the 9th of December, the fathers, seeing that his strength was much exhausted by a certain drowsiness like a lethargy, gave him Extreme Unction. In a short time, recoveriug from that state, he was asked if he would like to receive the divine Viaticum, to which, with a tremulous yet animated voice, he answered, "God! God! give me my God;" and having received Him, he spent some time in the most profound silence, enjoying in the arms of his Saviour the happiness of heaven, which he already anticipated. During the whole of that day, his room was filled with various religious, both of ours and other orders, with gentlemen and prelates, who, the more consolation they derived from contemplating the affections of that heart and the sweet serenity of his countenance, were the more afflicted in seeing that he was on the point of death, who was worthy to live for ever. Having entirely lost the use of speech, and passed a few hours in a placid agony, the holy father, towards the close of the night, sweetly gave up his spirit into the hands of that Lord who had created it, and went, as we hope, to shine above as a star of the brightest light, according to the oracle of the prophet Daniel, "Qui ad justitiam erudiunt multos, quasi stellæ in perpetuas æternitates." His happy passage occurred on the aforesaid day of the 9th of December, during the octave of the Immacu-

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late Conception, and on the very octave day of S. Francis Xavier; so that he seems in this to have been favoured by the Queen of Angels, and the glorious apostle of the Indies, his singular protector, master, and patron. He died in the house of our noviciate in the seventieth year of his age, fourteen years of which he had spent in the world, and fifty-six in the Society.

He was in figure well proportioned and stout, of a majestic aspect, sanguine complexion, and robust strength; his disposition sweet and affable, full of generosity and vivacity: he was gifted with sublime talents and profound judgment, and seemed to be formed by nature for great things. As we have already shown in part, God made use of him as an instrument for undertakings of a more than ordinary nature in His divine service. It is scarcely credible how beautiful and smiling his countenance remained after death, which was taken as a clear sign of his glory in heaven. Those who stood around seemed incapable of withdrawing themselves from the scene, for it did not, as is generally the case with dead bodies, suggest any feelings of horror, but on the contrary, it exhaled a sweet odour of devotion, and occasioned a most delightful consolation. On the evening of the following day it was exposed in the public church for the solemn obsequies, and many nobles and prelates assembled there, besides a great concourse of fathers of our Society, among whom, assisted by his father's assistant, was the general himself, Tirso Gonzalez, who, with paternal

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charity, had come the previous day to administer to him the last rites, and had made the encomium of the singular merits of this worthy son.

No sooner were the funeral solemnities concluded, than the body was carried back to the sacristy, to afford an opportunity to those artists who had come for the purpose to take the portrait of the deceased. In fine, after satisfying the devotion of those who wished to kiss his sacred hands, he was buried in the ground devoted to the novices; and though this was done by the superiors, because that of the priests could not at the time be used, yet I am persuaded that God disposed it thus for the greater consolation of that blessed soul, which will perhaps rejoice that its body reposes among those angels of their first fervour and blooming innocence. As the sun when it is eclipsed has more beholders than in its greatest brilliancy, so after the death of Father Segneri, he began to be known much better and venerated more than before. Many, even persons of high birth, begged for something which had belonged to him, and many of them preserved these things in silver cases as most precious relics. On all sides the greatest ardour was evinced to become minutely acquainted with the eminent actions of the father; and that little account which Father Pinamonti composed served to spread his glory throughout the whole of Europe. Persons of every state invoked him in their private prayers, and recounted graces which they had obtained from God through his interces-

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sion. Different congregations among whom the father had preached celebrated his funeral solemnities. His likeness was printed, and numerous copies struck. His serene highness, the Grand Duke, having received the sorrowful intelligence of the death of Father Segneri, gave orders to his ministers at Rome to send to him at Florence a picture of the Father, taken as much from the original as possible; and this he kept in a private apartment, in order, as he himself writes, to have always before his eyes the resemblance of him whom he bore stamped on his heart: and in fine, in order to impress in a lively manner the image of the deceased in the minds of his counsellors and secretaries of state, he caused to be read aloud in their presence that short relation which was written of his life.

CHAPTER VII.

FATHER SEGNERI'S LOVE OF GOD, AND CONFIDENCE IN THE DIVINE PROTECTION. HIS METHOD OF MENTAL PRAYER, AND OTHER DEVOTIONS.

I SHALL now, cutting short what might here be added of the glorious memory of this great servant of God, content myself by drawing for the common profit a short sketch of his eminent virtues, which have hitherto not been touched upon. And in the first place, as queen over all the rest, his fervent charity towards God presents

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itself to me. Of the value of this virtue Father Segneri was well aware, and in one of those writings which I before mentioned, he has the following words with no less unction than talent: "There are two ways of reclaiming a piece of ground, that has become wild and woody: the first is, to take the hatchet in hand and cut away the branches one by one. The second is, to set fire to it; and this method is beyond comparison, not only the easiest, but also the most salutary; for the land that has been thus burnt, becomes also more fertile, according to the saying, Sæpe etiam steriles incendere profuit agros. The same thing exactly happens to our souls. We can proceed by means of various virtues extirpating vice after vice, but this is a work of much time, great labour, and comparatively little fruit. The true way is to apply to the heart a great fire of the love of God, and this immediately effects what otherwise would be done with greater difficulty; moreover, it renders the heart not merely cleansed from vice, but wonderfully productive of good. Now I have felt in myself a great desire that God would cast this fire from heaven upon my heart, since of myself I know not how to enkindle it." Another time, whilst enjoying those lights of prayer with which he was favoured, he besought our Lord, in terms truly seraphic, to vouchsafe to grant him His love, saying, "I have offended You, my God; it is true, I have despised You; for so long a time I have had no regard for You; I have abandoned You: take then vengence on me; behold my heart; strike it, wound it in every

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part, but with the arrows of Your divine love, so that in spite of itself it may render You the homage You deserve. No other vengeance, my Love, can You take, because now is the time for pity, and not for judgment." And a little after, he continues, "You are all amiable, all sweet, all affectionate, and I have treated You as if You were the most cruel creature in the world. Ah! turn then and take revenge; grant that my heart, mortally wounded with love, may repent, and may confess, overpowered with ardour and sweetness, that I have too much offended."

To love God and serve Him truly, was all that he ever esteemed and looked to; and this he declared in a letter to one of our society. "My dear Father," he says, "you have really no other concern than to love God, to become inflamed with His holy love, and to do His most holy will in everything with the same pleasure; all the rest is mere deceit." His greatest affliction was that he appeared not to love God, and not to do for Him what he knew he was obliged; and writing to a confidential friend, he says, "I confess sincerely, that the only subject of bitterness to me, is not to have been able even till now to give to God the least sign of true love; for I know not whether I love God for what He is, or for what He confers upon me." And yet we know that the charity of Father Segneri was so disinterested, that he said he did not love even his own soul because it was his own, but solely because it came from God; and he has been heard to say, that though he

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had believed he ought to have been condemned for ever to hell, yet would he never cease to do all he possibly could for the glory of his Divine Lord.

From pure charity generally springs an ardent desire to be united entirely with God, and to advance quickly onwards towards seeing Him face to face; whence we find the saints exclaiming every day, "Cupio dissolvi et esse cum Christo!" Now, Father Segneri had a wonderful and holy impatience to be thus dissolved, which he expresses in one of those fruits of his prayer, when pouring out his enamoured soul before God, he has left us a noble instruction, speaking in this manner: "Festinemus ergo ingredi in illam requiem." "Thus, my Lord, Your fervent apostle speaks to me, and thus he exhorts me to hasten and enter into that blessed repose, which You in Your mercy have prepared for me, unless I be so wretched as by my demerits to render myself unworthy of it. But what can I do to hasten to the possession of so great a good? Can I, with my own hands, open the gates of this prison? Can I break asunder these chains? Can I dissolve the ties which keep me imprisoned? Ah! my Lord, You know well that this is not permitted us, but we ought all to remain waiting for that hour in which it shall please God to call us; and though we may pray that that hour may soon arrive, yet we cannot hasten it in the least. I believe, however, that the obtaining this speedy dissolution, depends on the performance of good, and the satisfying to

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the utmost of our power for the innumerable sins which we have committed; since, without doubt, we shall then have a shorter time to remain in purgatory, and consequently we shall the sooner enter into the abode of our eternal repose. Yes, my Jesus, vouchsafe to grant me that in this way I may hasten to behold Your most amiable countenance! This will be my repose, this my joy, this my much wished-for felicity. But what will become of me, wretched creature, what will become of me, if when I am dead I shall not be able to behold You for many, many years? Ah! no, my sweet Jesus, rather grant that in purgatory I may suffer with intensity, what I should otherwise have to suffer in duration, in order that my pains may be less lasting. Therefore, let them finish speedily, let all those pains come upon me in the same moment; for most grievous of all sufferings will be the delay." Such were the sentiments of his heart, and I cannot omit another similar aspiration, which might deserve to be added to the soliloquies of S. Augustine. "My most loving Jesus!" exclaims Father Segneri in another place, "You are in heaven, and from that celestial abode You have condescended to espouse my poor soul which dwells on earth. As a pledge of these sweet espousals, You have given me holy baptism, and a vocation to religion. But from whatever creatures I inquire concerning You, I hear proclaimed such things as cannot be imagined by him who has not seen them. They tell me that if a hundred suns were joined to-

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gether, their united splendour would not equal the beauty of Your countenance. A Teresa, who saw no part of Your Sacred Body but Your Hands, tells me that she remained many days in ecstacy at the sight. They who have heard You speak, all assure me, that Your voice is sufficient to enamour every heart with a single accent. They tell me, moreover, that You have a palace more magnificent by far than any that can be seen among mortals, and that in the roads round about they tread upon flowers as here we trample mud beneath our feet. They assure me that You have a Father of such exalted greatness, that He is Omnipotent; that You have a Mother whom no one else could look upon, even for once, unless he chose to remain blind during the rest of his life; that You have about You ministers, knights, and pages, who are without number, and that each one of them is greater than any king that ever ruled on earth. So many things, in fine, my Lord, they tell me of Your beauty, Your excellence, and Your unheard-of greatness, that it is not possible for me to stray from You. Do, then, my Love, condescend to show me this Your sweet countenance! 'Ostende mihi faciem tuam, and salvi erimus.' Now I understand why Your Catherines of Sienna, Your Magdalenes, Your Gertrudes, Your Teresas, and those other virgins of Yours could no longer endure to remain on earth, because they knew they were Your spouses, and were well acquainted with the loveliness of Your countenance. But what would be my lot, dear Spouse of my soul, if, when at the end of

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my days, Your messengers come to warn me that now is the hour for setting forth, I should have still to ask for time to prepare myself, if I should have to cry out, 'Inducias usque mane,' if I should have to beg some time for repentance. Oh, my Jesus, do not permit it, I implore You by the love You bear for this poor soul, no longer mine but Yours, since You have espoused it to Yourself. Grant that now, at least, I may begin to prepare myself as I ought, that I may take leave of all creatures, and henceforth retain no sort of attachment to them. This shall be my consolation in this grievous absence, that as You grant me a longer time to labour in this world, I may appear before You the more perfect and adorned with merits. This is the sentiment which You were pleased to give me on those words, 'Ostende faciem tuam, et salvi erimus,' but I have not been able to express it on paper in the manner You declared it to my soul."

From such an excessive love arose in Father Segneri that affectionate confidence which he ever possessed in God, leaving to Him, as to a loving father, all concern about himself and his salvation, on all occasions, but particularly when occupied in the missions. He was once engaged in conversation in the hall of our college at Macerata, when one of the fathers casually entered and left the door open behind him. Father Segneri turning round, begged he would be so good as to shut the door, since it occasioned a slight wind to blow upon him; upon which the other in astonishment said, "What! is your Rever-

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ence going to set out to-morrow morning for the missions, to meet with thousands of storms, and does this slight breath of wind now cause you so much concern?" Father Segneri gave this wise reply: "To-day it belongs to me to take care of myself, to-morrow it will be for God to have a care of me." As he was one day sailing along the Riviera di Genova, a violent storm suddenly arose, and the mariners were anxious to bring the boat to land, but they found this impossible, for, on the one hand, the waves rose mountains high, and on the other, craggy rocks jutted out before them, so that in escaping the one, they ran the risk of being dashed against the other. Those who were in the boat raised a pitiful cry to Heaven, and looked upon themselves as already lost. Father Segneri alone, full of confidence in his God, presented a countenance, not merely serene, but smiling, as if he had been taking recreation in the midst of the most placid calm; and all on a sudden God caused the tempest to be lulled, and gave all an opportunity of reaching the shore in safety. Another time, whilst crossing a river with a number of others, the violence of the current overpowered the pilot, and hurried the boat down towards a dangerous fall. All recommended themselves to the father, who, as usual, without showing the slightest symptom of fear, exclaimed, "Faith, faith, and fear nothing." The result was, the boatman, recovering strength and courage, resumed his labours at the helm, and everything passed off favourably.

Father Segneri gave a still more signal proof

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of his confidence in God on another occasion, which I will here relate in the words of Signor Lorenzo Gualtiere, a minister of great esteem at the court of the grand duke, and who was commissioned by his Highness to accompany Father Segneri in a journey which the father had to make from Florence to Rome, and back again from Rome to Florence. "Returning from Rome," says the gentleman, "between Perugia and Arezzo, we saw ourselves in imminent danger of perishing among the heights of Cortona; for the carriage fell down a deep precipice, and I, expecting that we should be both dashed to pieces, cried out, 'Jesus, Jesus, we are perishing;' but the father smiling, answered, 'No, it is nothing, let us thank our Lord, (and at that very instant we were in the act of falling,) we shall fall without injury," and neither carriage, coachman, nor horses, were hurt in the least. Then I said to him, "Father, if I had been alone, I should have been crushed to atoms, because I am a sinner: whereupon the good father replied, "Ah, my son, I am a much greater sinner than you, for I am the very dregs of the wicked; but we are travelling in the cause of God, and we should entertain no fears whilst He is guiding us. Let us love Him more and more, and let us make good resolutions, because in the other world, oh, what great things! oh, what great things!

We have seen above how, in the time of the missions, the most severe storms did not prevent him from beginning his discourses in the open fields, arranging the processions, and going

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through all the other exercises: and God, who inspired him with confidence to accomplish this, seems to have made him, in a certain way, lord of storms and of the elements.

Frequently, for having reproved persons of distinction for some public scandal, he was exposed to the most galling insults. When his work on Concord against the errors of the false quietists was published, it is incredible how many anonymous letters were sent to him, all filled with infamous affronts and cruel threats, so much so, that not to expose himself to their insulting persecution, many entreated him not to set out that year on the missions. But Father Segneri, always animated with the same spirit, ever relying on the protection of his Lord, cast aside every shadow of fear, constantly repeating his usual expression, that it was the cause of God, and that it was the part of God to defend it. However, if He should not be pleased to do so, he protested that he would be most happy in giving away for love of Him his blood and his life, and he used to say to God affectionately those words which S. Bernard, in similar circumstances, addressed to him, "Bonum mihi si me digneris uti pro clypeo. Nor was his confidence in God less remarkable when this same book on Concord was prohibited in Rome. He made not the least complaint, nor did there appear in him the slightest mark of displeasure; he even consoled his friends, who were condoling with him, and ceased not to repeat that saying of his, that it was the cause of God, and that God would protect it as, in fact,

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was afterwards seen, for as the truth was brought more openly to light, and the serpent which lay concealed among the flowers was discovered, the errors were condemned by the sacred tribunal of the inquisition, and the work of Father Segneri was restored to the public, to the great glory of the author.

From this loving protection of God, Father Segneri drew a new and powerful motive for his apostolic zeal, as he expresses in those wonderful sentiments, where he says, "I have remarked how effectually God has undertaken my defence on numberless occasions when I was exposed to dangers, both temporal and spiritual, and, therefore, I have animated myself through feelings of gratitude to take up the cause of God against those who wish to offend Him, as He defends me against such as would injure me. This seems to me an excellent motive to urge me on to zeal for the good of souls and the conversion of sinners." "Qui tangit vos, tangit pupillam oculi Mei," says our Lord to His servants; "and who can express the zeal which He has for each one of us, defending us with a drawn sword against all our enemies, visible and invisible. Such ought to be our zeal for God against His enemies of all kinds, Christians, heretics, pagans, and others. Ponam zelum Meum in te, is the sweet promise which God makes to me by Ezechiel: Zelus domus Tuæ comedit me, is the answer I ought to make to God."

It is a property of one who loves, to wish to be ever in the company of the person beloved, and

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continually conversing with him; he therefore who ardently loves God, will desire that he may never be withdrawn from prayer, which is in fact a sweet conversation with God Himself. Hence the Apostle said, "Nostra conversatio in cœlis est. Now to this holy exercise of prayer Father Segneri was so devoted, that he had no limited time for it; but besides the hour which he prayed in the morning, all the rest of the day which remained free from his studies and his duties towards his neighbours, was devoted to this pious exercise. His companions certify that they generally found him on his knees in the act of praying in the middle of his room, and that not unfrequently he was seen to be so absorbed in God as not to perceive that any one had entered his room. When he had to recommend to God any business of great importance, especially if it concerned the Society, for which he ever felt a most cordial attachment and esteem, he would occupy whole nights in prayer; though, to speak the truth, when he was going from place to place during the day, or employed in any other occupation, he was always observed to be recollected. Indeed, he showed that he never lost sight of God, observing punctually that great precept of our Redeemer, "Oportet semper orare, et nunquam deficere." He felt himself called by God in a singular manner to this holy exercise, as he has described in one of those written memorials. "It has appeared to me," he says, "by a most clear light, that all my endeavours should be spent in the study of prayer, for I think that, judging from

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all present circumstances, this is undeniably what God wishes from me. I have gratefully thanked Him that He has vouchsafed to choose me for this high honour of treating familiarly with Him, though I have never done anything to deserve it; and if this may be called the better part, conformably with those words, "Maria optimam partem elegit, quæ non auferetur ab ea," I may be in a certain manner excused before my Lord, if I, though a vile worm, console myself with this reflection, that it was not I who chose it for myself, but He who chose it for me."

His method of prayer in the beginning was that of simple meditation, with an active exertion of the understanding, and fervent affections of the will on the different mysteries and passages of the Holy Scripture, from which source in a great measure he drew those eminent lights which he afterwards committed to writing in four small volumes, entitled "The Manna of the Soul." After some time he appears to have made a change in the above method, employing himself wholly in supplicating God, and begging favours from Him, in the manner our Divine Master Himself taught us in the Lord's Prayer. This secret Father Segneri once confided to one of our fathers, saying that his eyes were at length opened to understand the true manner of prayer. We may gather the same from a letter of his which it will perhaps afford consolation to hear. "My present hope," he says, "is entirely founded on the infallible efficacy which prayer has of obtaining the object of its requests from God, provided that

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they be really for our good. Oh! what glorious words are those which Christ made use of, 'Petite et accipietis!' Could he have made the promise more clearly, more universally, with less exception? All that is required of us, is to ask with perseverance, and surely this is no great labour to undergo for such an object. We have nothing else to do but to ask of God, by the merits of His Son, that He will make us His true servants, His true friends, and then we may leave all to Him, who will undoubtedly find some means to accomplish our desire. As for myself, I am resolved to assail His ears without interruption, and to repeat my prayers until I become importunate. Nor am I discouraged at seeing myself so miserable, so wretched, and so devoid of all merits, because I profess to be like a beggar asking relief from God, the great alms-giver. And who does not know, that in the case of a beggar we never look to his merits or his claims upon our favour, as we do in that of labourers, servants, and the like? His very misery is the great claim of the poor man; and the greater his misery is, the more urgently are we called upon to relieve him. Be this, however, as it may, Christ cannot retract His words. He has promised, that whoever shall persevere to ask in His Name, shall be heard. If we are constant in asking, the thing is done. 'Benedictus Deus, qui non amovit orationem meam et misericordiam suam a me,' cried out holy David: and S. Augustine, writing on this passage, says: 'Cum videris a te non amotam deprecationem tuam, securus esto, quia non est a te amota misericordia ejus.'

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We have no excuse then; let us ask, let us importune, let us render ourselves troublesome to God, if this can be; but it certainly can not, for, on the contrary, we then become more dear to Him; and it is not he who asks that is troublesome, but rather he who will not ask, like Achaz, who said 'Non petam.'"

To keep his mind more intimately engaged on God at his prayers, and during the rest of the day, Father Segneri adopted another pious and beautiful practice, which deserves to be embraced by every one who desires to have a more intimate union with God. In a letter which he sent to a friend, he expresses himself in these terms: "I wish to communicate to you a practice which I lately read in Osorius, as followed by S. Augustine, of treating with Jesus Christ under different titles on the several days of the week, as I will here describe: but I have adapted it more particularly to my own individual case. On Monday I entertain myself with Him as my judge; on Tuesday, as my king; on Wednesday, as my physician: and on Thursday, as my spouse. On Friday, I treat with Him as my Redeemer, who bears the memory of the Passion; on Saturday, as my brother, who carries with Him the memory of the ever Blessed Virgin; and on Sunday, as my glorifier, who brings to my mind the delights of Paradise." On each of these days he seems to have conversed with Jesus under the various titles above mentioned; at one time recommending himself to Him as a criminal, at another, as a subject, or a sick man, praying for appropriate

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graces, and inflaming his soul with suitable affections; and thus during all the rest of the day, he could more easily keep his mind united with God.

But as with these methods of prayer fervour every day increased in the soul of Father Segneri, it pleased our Lord by degrees to raise him to a most sublime degree of prayer, disclosing to him more and more His divine countenance. The father himself has left us this attested in one of those writings so often mentioned, where he says: "On this day our Lord, to relieve my mind from all anxiety, caused me to read a chapter in the work entitled 'The Way of Perfection,' written by S. Teresa, in which I found minutely explained the method of prayer, which, by His grace, our Lord has communicated to me; so that I now labour under no apprehensions as to its being conformable to His holy will, and of this, indeed, my spiritual father has assured me. This is the twenty-eighth chapter, in which she describes the prayer of recollection. It is true I fancy I have sometimes participated in the prayer of quiet, and though perhaps not with all the three powers at once, yet it seems that my will has enjoyed a great union with God, being fixed in His presence, enjoying Him, and desiring to be entirely transformed into Him alone. If the thought wanders, it is so slightly, that it immediately returns, and leaves no opportunity for praying. Blessed be our dear Lord for all this."

Thus far Father Segneri. And whoever wishes to understand the perfect value of this prayer of

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recollection, may read the twenty-eighth chapter of S. Teresa alluded to; and not less deserving of perusal will be the thirty-first chapter, where, speaking of the prayer of true quiet, with which Father Segneri confesses that he is sometimes favoured, "This," says the saint, "is something supernatural, and cannot be acquired by any diligence on our part."

From this we may learn how eminent was the prayer which Father Segneri enjoyed, who at his devotions had an almost continual gift of tears, and this not only during the time of prayer, but in visiting holy places, in speaking familiarly of the things of God, in his conversations, and in the discourses which he gave in the missions. But this favour he enjoyed in the most singular manner at the time of mass, for when he was about to receive the divine Sacrament, he became like a flame of fire, and a copious stream of tears flowed from his eyes; so that the brother, who here at Rome served his mass every morning during the last years of his life, relates that he invariably found his handkerchief so bathed with his excessive weeping, that it was necessary to stretch it out in the open air to dry. Many also testify that they have often seen him when about to communicate at mass, so overpowered with fervour, that from the violent pressure of his heart, numerous drops of blood were forced down his nostrils. To this divine sacrament Father Segneri had an unbounded reverence and love, which led him frequently in the day, and even during the night, to go and adore our blessed

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Saviour there present. But what were his feelings at the present moment of receiving him at the altar, it would have been difficult to conceive, had we not possessed them written with his own hand. "Having," he says in one of those precious papers, "this morning besought our Lord after mass, that He would condescend to suggest to me what affections were the most becoming after communion, and the most pleasing to Him, (for I am sure that a man ought not, then, to be occupied in exercises of the understanding, but in the affections of the will, and that we ought not, whilst we possess God within us, foolishly to seek Him without,) it appears to me, that before all other emotions should come that of awe-stricken amazement. Reverence is little, humility is little, gratitude is little, and love is little. A wonder, the greatest of all wonders, as this one is called, memoriam fecit mirabilium suorum, appears to call for nothing so expressly as astonishment. God to me! God with me! God in me! What can I do! what can I think of this but remain buried in profound wonder, dead, as it were, and entirely absorbed in an infinite astonishment? When the soldiers of Holofernes saw the singular beauty of a Judith, we should fancy that they would be immediately captivated, and that the first impression would be a great love, so that they would be inflamed with an ardent desire to possess her; but it was not so. 'Considerabant faciem ejus, et erat in oculis eorum stupor, quoniam pulchritudinem ejus mirabantur nimis.' For, indeed, this is the first emotion

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raised by great and universal things, and after this the others may have place. Now so it must be in my case. Considering, if not the divine beauty, for my eyes could not endure the view, at least, the divine goodness to me, I ought in the first place, to be filled with admiration, and then I may break out into other affections."

Father Segneri nourished his charity and devotion not only by mental, but also by vocal prayer. He had continually in his mouth different short prayers, which we call ejaculations, a great number of which he had gathered together from the Psalms and other select portions of the holy Scriptures. He always recited the canonical hours on his knees very slowly, and accompanied by the feelings of his heart those sacred words which he uttered with his lips. In order to preserve in a more lively manner in his mind the all-important recollection of death, he frequently recited the prayers prescribed by the Church for the dying, fancying himself now approaching that terrible hour, on which our lot for all eternity depends. It was his custom also to recite the rosary of our Blessed Lady, to whom he was tenderly devoted, having chosen her as his principal advocate for the happy success of his holy missions; and to incite the faithful to devotion towards her, he composed that golden little treatise, entitled, "Il Divoto di Maria," and was actually occupied in writing a beautiful explanation of the Magnificat, when he was overtaken by death, and to our great misfortune the work remained unfinished. At the time of his

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missions he every day said a very long prayer which he himself had composed, full of lively sentiments and affection, to beg of God such graces as were most fitting this holy ministry. To all this he added the frequent reading of spiritual books, and he took a particular delight in the Lives of the Saints; hence he had perused all the six volumes of Surius, and many other Lives of more modern saints. He frequently exhorted others to this pious exercise, protesting that whatever he knew of spiritual matters, he had imbibed it all from this pure fountain; and, in truth, it seems that God, by this means more than any other, poured into his soul that great light which enabled him to guide many holy souls, and granted him such a singular talent of discerning spirits, by which he showed himself so skilful in distinguishing the true gold from the false. On one occasion he discovered at the very first investigation the consummate hypocrisy of a celebrated religious woman, who up to that time had been revered as a seraph. As Father Segneri rendered it manifest that she kept up an infamous connection with the devil, her body after her death was buried at the foot of a tree in the garden belonging to the convent, and not long afterwards her sacrilegious bones were burned, according to a just decree of the sacred inquisition.

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CHAPTER VIII.

HIS CHARITY FOR HIS NEIGHBOUR. THE REVERENCE WHICH WAS SHOWN TO HIM, WITH HIS CONTEMPT FOR HONOURS AND EVERYTHING IN THIS WORLD, AND HIS DESIRE OF HUMILIATION.

An inflamed love of God cannot possibly fail to be accompanied with love for our neighbour; for the love of God is like a fire, which never remains at rest until it has converted everything into itself. Moreover, no one can be ignorant of what our Redeemer said to the apostle, "Si diligis me, pasce agnos meos, pasce oves meas." And thus it was with Father Segneri; as the blessed fire of Divine love burned within him, he could by no means suppress it within the limits of his own heart, but was obliged to give it free scope, and he conceived an ardent desire of converting, as far as was possible for him, the whole world to God. Little more need be here said upon this subject, since we have seen him indefatigably engaged for so many years in the apostolic labour of the missions, and this with such real delight, that he was never seen more cheerful than when the most busily engaged. These days he called days of paradise, and said that for one single day like them he would have given a whole kingdom. As soon as the time arranged for setting out on the missions arrived,

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nothing could detain him an hour, though sometimes he had actually on his hands business of great importance; nor can it be sufficiently expressed how the moment he issued from the college, he became quite another man, superior to himself, all inflamed with zeal, generosity, and fervour, displaying the most manifest proofs that he was really filled with and borne along by the Spirit of the Lord. For the most part he had to deal with rude people in the country districts, yet he never showed any unpleasantness, but was uniformly affable in his behaviour; he conversed indifferently with all, assisted all, served all, and ever declared that he was ready to shed the last drop of his blood for the salvation of each one. A priest, who was his companion, assures us that he has frequently heard him say, that if he were to see heaven open, and had the opportunity of entering if he wished, he would nevertheless retire back, and gladly remain on earth for the salvation of souls; in which he imitated that heroic act which we so much extol in our holy Father S. Ignatius, as a prodigy of his generous zeal.

With the exception of the souls of men, there was nothing on earth about which he had the least concern. He was not unfrequently in the presence of ladies sumptuously adorned with precious garments and rich jewels, yet so far from being dazzled by their splendour, he, with a magnanimous contempt, drew from this sight a noble sentiment, which, on one occasion, he expressed to his companion, saying, "Oh, what a glorious

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sacrifice could these ladies make to God, if, for His love, they would divest themselves of these vanities, on which they set so much store." A father of high authority, who had been his superior in Rome, says of him, "This detachment from the things of this world is well known to those who have been acquainted with him, and I can speak from his own words, because he has frequently conversed with me on the worthlessness of everything except God and eternity." But he himself has left us a testimony of this in a letter to a friend, to whom he thus writes in confidence, "I this morning made my poor prayer on those words of the Psalm, which so forcibly came home to me, Diviserunt sibi vestimenta mea, and this is the light which God has given me, that we wish for the things of God, but not for Himself. If Christ has anything which can serve for our comfort or interests, there are many who run eagerly to share it, but who is there who desires Christ Himself naked on a cross? Shall we divide this treasure between two of us? But why do I say divide, since we can all equally possess the whole? Ah, my God, I can speak on this, but I know not how to act! It is true, I think I do not care for those garments of Christ which serve for the body; it seems to me but a slight thing to give up for Him all external goods, such as friends, honours, enjoyments, and the like: but those garments which serve for the soul, adorn it, enrich it, and comfort it, (he means true spiritual consolations,) these appear to me difficult to renounce, and yet of these, or at least of the affection to them, he must

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strip himself who wishes for God alone." In conformity with these sentiments, I find among the fruits of his prayers, that he thanked God for his deafness, as for a singular favour, since this defect rendered him incapable of the government of communities, and other more exalted offices in religion; hence he hoped that he might be left alone, and little cared for, as one already half dead. He frequently met with princes, who were very anxious to favour him, but he never availed himself of their kindness for his own convenience, nor would he accept anything from them, which could be at all at variance with his humility and religious poverty, which he esteemed his principal treasure. Moreover, he would never consent at the request of any one whatsoever, to procure from princes offices or benefices, or any such like favours for others, unless he were convinced that it would contribute to the divine service, and the spiritual welfare of his neighbour. However, he took advantage of the good will of the great ones of the world, to prevent scandals, as in the case of Ranuccio, duke of Parma, from whom he obtained many salutary edicts, which were embraced by others, princes likewise, to the inestimable benefit of piety and morals. During the missions, different gentlemen sent him many noble presents, but these he either refused to accept, or if civility obliged him to act otherwise, he immediately transferred them to the houses of the sick poor, or to the public hospital. Whilst he was passing through certain cities, the Fathers of the Society would invite him to go and see the most famous

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curiosities in the neighbourhood: from such invitations, however, he excused himself, finding his delight in being retired in his room, and he preferred to be esteemed wanting in courtesy, rather than deprive God and himself of that time, of which he had always a holy avarice.

On all occasions he showed himself far removed from all worldly attachment to his relations. Accordingly a brother of his, who lived in the world, declared that he never wished to hear about the interests of the family, and if he were written to on the subject he would return no answer. It happened that his nephew, who was the only surviving heir of the family, was called by God to follow him into our society. His parents could not bear the idea of their family becoming extinct with him, but Father Segneri wrote to them many impressive letters, urging them in the strongest terms not to oppose the graces of God, and exhorted his nephew to remain firm and stedfast in his holy resolution. As one of the relatives, a man of considerable authority, still refused permission to the youth, under pretence that he wished for a more manifest proof of his vocation, the father protested that if it were necessary he would lay the affair before the Pope, and ceased not to press the matter until he saw his nephews secure within the walls of the noviciate at Rome. His maxim on this point was, that it mattered little whether there was one family more or fewer in the world, but that the only thing of importance was to secure our eternal salvation. If he were engaged in any-

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thing for the public good or the glory of God, then it was that he truly trampled under foot all worldly interests and all human esteem. He was once entrusted by the Supreme Pontiff with a negociation of importance with the principal ministers of a powerful prince. Father Segneri, who considered that the honour of God required a somewhat different course from what these gentlemen wished to follow, in every meeting which he held with them persisted with the utmost constancy in his views, without allowing himself to be at all swayed by the authority of the persons, or the clear knowledge he had that certain individuals would take occasion from this to lower as much as possible his character with the Pope, as a man of extravagant notions, obstinate and untractable in his ideas.

When we meet with some great difficulty, there are none among us who do not endeavour to procure some assistance from our friends, communicating to them our wants. It was not so, however, with the fervent charity of Father Segneri, he, on those occasions, sought no consolation from man, but on the contrary, concealed from all whatever evils or disappointments he might meet with, and wished to be relieved by no one but God. "If any one confides to me his secret," he informs us, "or any trouble which weighs upon his mind, I feel myself moved to love him for the confidence and esteem he reposes in me, by exposing his heart to me; but if I find that he afterwards entrusts to others what he has communicated to me, and makes it known to all, I no longer

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value his confidence, but rather feel indignant, because it appears that he means to ridicule me. Thus it is with God. He experiences great delight when I confide to Him, as to my dearest friend, all my troubles and all my difficulties, tribulationem meam ante ipsum pronuntio: but if I go and utter my complaints before others, discovering to them the secrets of my heart, God no longer values that act of special friendship. I am therefore content that God should be the witness of my afflictions, and I will not go about seeking consolation from man, nor will I reveal my trouble to any one."

One of the most heroic acts of Christian charity is, to have no regard to the respect of men, to entertain a lowly opinion of oneself, and to desire and seek for contempt from others. For this there is required a most lively supernatural faith, an inflamed charity, and a special grace from God. Now Father Segneri, strengthened by divine favours, practised in a wonderful manner this sublime virtue in all its branches. But in order the better to comprehend the value of this, it appears necessary that I should first give a short account of the honour and applause he met with in every place. I say nothing of the admiration with which his sermons were received, and all his other works, though these were published with so much applause, that he has ever been esteemed one of the most eminent writers that have illustrated our age, particularly in regard to his polishedstyle of diction: so that the Florentine Academy, who are such severe censors

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on this point, and so reserved in bestowing this honour even on writers of the highest excellence, frequently quote Father Segneri in their dictionary as one of the most classical authors in the Italian language. I shall merely mention then some tittle of the honour and respect which were shown him on account of the sanctity of his holy life. It is certain that these were exceedingly great, because throughout all the parts of Italy where he went to preach the missions, he was called by no other name than that of the "Holy Father." The most pleasing subject of discourse, both in private circles and the public squares, was his great zeal, of which every one had something wonderful to relate. People ran after him, and prostrated themselves as to an angel. In many places they would sweep the streets for many miles during night where he had to pass the next morning, sometimes strewing them with flowers; and others would go out to meet him with a canopy, nor could anything restrain their fervour. It is impossible to express how great was the attention they paid to his sermons, how they loved him, and submitted to him all their differences, how eager they were to obtain anything which had belonged to him, even the scraps of bread which remained on the table at which he had taken his meal, or the very water in which he had washed his feet; and it is the constant belief that by this bread given to sick persons to eat, and this water given them to drink, many have been cured. What efforts did they use to receive from his hands a simple medal! The crowns of thorns

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which he wore during the penitential processions, were often the cause of serious disputes among the great number of those who aspired to possession of them; and a person of quality, who had succeeded in obtaining one of them, held it so dear that he kept it in a superb casket, and used to say, "If I leave nothing else to my son but this crown, I shall think that I have left him sufficiently rich." The very boards on which he had stood when preaching were held in veneration, and sometimes the people ran to cut them in pieces, carrying them away as relics, heedless of of the cries and blows of the hand of the owner, to prevent them carrying away the spoil. When he crossed by water from one place to another, the sailors were all eager to receive him into their boats, esteeming themselves thus secure for ever against the tempests; and no sooner had the father reached the opposite bank than he was assailed by whole crowds who were awaiting his arrival, some to kiss his hand, and others to touch him with their beads. These practices were at length carried to such an extent, that in many places, and particularly on the Riviera di Genova, it was thought necessary to station a guard around him for his defence, as the people ceased not to press upon him and to tear his garments. Not unfrequently also it was necessary to put him in a covered conveyance, otherwise it would have been impossible to proceed from place to place. In the city of Genoa, where he had not even given a mission, having occasion to pay a visit to the palace, he was obliged to go concealed

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in a litter, and to issue forth by a private door, thus deceiving a vast concourse who were awaiting him at the entrance of the College ; and some who happened to gain a sight of him, began to follow the litter, telling every one whom they met that the father was inside.

Though these demonstrations of reverence were common to all places, yet were they the most unbounded in parts where society had reached the highest degree of refinement. They were not confined to the common people only, but the nobility, knights, ladies, and magistrates, the highest rulers, bishops and cardinals, all concurred in showing their veneration for him alike ; and the more they conversed with him, the greater became their esteem and respect for him. Hence a prelate of great eminence having examined at considerable length the whole course of his life, hesitated not to declare to one of our religious, that if he had been Pope after the death of Father Segneri, he would have dispensed with all the bulls of his predecessors, and without delay, raised him upon our altars for the veneration of the faithful. There was a cardinal bishop, who with naked feet and a rope about his neck, like another S. Charles Borromeo, went out to receive him at the gates of the city, accompanied by the canons of the cathedral, and extending to him the crucifix, he besought him on his knees that he would first preach to him, as standing in the greatest need, before he began to preach to his flock. Another bishop wished to serve his mass as a simple clerk. One with his own hands washed his feet ; and another kissed them repeatedly

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in the open street, nor could he be restrained by all the endeavours of Father Segneri, who, filled with confusion, begged him to desist. In Bologna and other places, different portraits were taken of him, whilst he was yet living, and there are some who attest that they have seen persons on their knees at prayer before these pictures. The republic of Genoa especially assigned him a galley to transport him to Livorno, and wherever else he pleased. Many communities unanimously agreed to celebrate for his soul a certain number of masses, and funeral obsequies, when they should receive the intelligence of his death; and they decreed, moreover, to raise a monument with an honourable inscription, for the perpetual memory of his fervent preaching, and his fruitful missions. Who does not see that honours like these require a mind well fortified, so as not to waver and be puffed up with vain-glory? And yet Father Pinamonti, the constant witness of the life of Father Segneri, assures us, that he evinced not the least pleasure in all this, just as if their honours had been bestowed upon a statue of marble. In order to fortify himself against the assaults of vain-glory, he had fixed in his mind a wise sentiment, which he explains in one of those papers, where he says, "To animate myself to despise the esteem of men, I have considered, and, with the grace of God, understood how true is that saying of S. Francis, that what man is in the sight of God, that he is and nothing more. It is sufficient to be known by Him; from everybody else I will endeavour to conceal myself. To appear, and not to be some-

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thing is vanity; to appear and to be is truth, but to be and not to appear is sanctity." Such were the sentiments of the good father, and in order to impress this in a more lively manner on his heart, he for some time kept a sheet of paper at the head of his bed, on which was written this sentiment of our Redeemer, Quod altum est hominibus, abominatio est ante Deum.

Never was he known to boast of the applause which he met with, nor even to speak a word on the subject, and if it was mentioned in his company, he immediately took measures to cut off the discourse. Many gentlemen and ladies wrote to him for the express purpose of becoming possessed of his handwriting, and preserving it through devotion: after a while the father began to suspect the truth, and from that time forward he never answered any of their letters, not minding to appear to them somewhat wanting in civility. Signor Cardinal Rosetti, Bishop of Faenza, was anxious to have published the account of the missions which Father Segneri had just concluded in that diocese, and committed the task to one of the most learned and prudent of his priests; the father became aware of this, and immediately procured that no mention should be made of the miraculous cures which were said to have been effected by him for the benefit of many sick persons. When the pernicious opinions and books of his adversaries the quietists had been condemned, it was expected by some that he would be glad to receive the congratulations of his friends, but his singular modesty on that occasion

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drew forth the admiration of all, for he neither spoke of the triumph, nor gave the smallest sign of any personal gratification. After the mission which he had been giving at Chiavari, his portrait was painted on a public wall, in the habit which he was accustomed to wear. Some months later, at the solicitation of a number of gentlemen of Genoa, the father returned to the same place to resume his apostolic labours, and, full of confusion, he perceived his likeness on the wall: on the last day, when he was about to take his departure, and the magistrates came to thank him and offer him every mark of kindness that could be bestowed, the only favour he asked was, (and he first obtained their word that they would not deny it him,) that they would efface that figure from the wall. When the people, with one voice, proclaimed him the holy father; and exclaimed through the streets and public squares, "Who wishes to buy the praises of the holy father?" and when the crowds, in reverence, surrounded him on their knees, showing a thousand acts of respect, all this tended to nothing else but to disquiet him, and make him use his endeavours to put a stop to it.

Extraordinary was the freedom of heart which he displayed in all his actions, without ever caring to conceal anything, which, in the eyes of persons of little judgment, would tend to the depreciation of his character. Owing to his being very stout, and to the excessive labours, both of body and mind, which he underwent for the good of souls, he stood in need of a considerable quantity of

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food. Never did he act with dissimulation, nor wish to appear as if he were keeping a rigid fast, but he took openly whatever he knew to be necessary for his support; and one day, when in conversation with certain ladies from Genoa, he related to them the honourable entertainment he had received in a certain place, adding, that he was much indebted to the kindness of one gentleman, who, in that hot season, had provided him with ices. When he began to grow old, he was obliged to use a horse in crossing some of the steeper mountains, and on these occasions he would freely mount in the presence of every one. He was desired in the last years of his life to cease travelling barefooted, but merely to uncover his feet when he approached the place destined for the mission; to which he always replied in the same words, "God preserve me from such hypocrisy; I will either go the whole of the journey with naked feet, or the whole of the journey with them covered." Sometimes, however, he acted in a contrary manner from this, for after having travelled to the very gate of the city barefoot, he would before entering, put on shoes, in case he were not going to give the missions; nor did he ever experience any difficulty in riding in a carriage with six horses, as happened to him in Genoa, Modena, and Parma, and, more than all, in Faenza, where he was highly favoured by Cardinal Rosetti, who, like a true estimator of things, looked upon this conduct of the father as an act of great virtue, and spoke of it in his praise. A like judgment was pro-

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nounced by the father inquisitor of Ancona, who having once invited Father Segneri to sup with him, the latter accepted the invitation with many thanks, leaving that good religious much edified thereat.

Father Segneri did not content himself with refusing to seek after honours and applause, but he desired moreover, and succeeded in many ways, in bringing contempt upon himself. In proof of his desires it will suffice for me here to adduce what he has himself left registered among these admirable sentiments of his: "I have been," he says, "for some days troubled with a temptation, and it was that in offering myself to God, as ready to endure for love of him, some great humiliation, one only occurred to me as an insuperable mortification, namely, to be totally deprived of my memory whilst delivering some discourse. Here I was brought into perplexity; for on the one side, I knew that I was obliged to accept with readiness everything from the Divine Hand, and, on the other, I feared that this very act of resignation would be required of me, and that God wished to prove me in this manner; so that a violent fear ensued, and for some time I was in great hesitation. I mentioned it to my spiritual father as a temptation, and in conformity with his advice, I succeeded in banishing it from my thoughts, because it is God's will that I do whatever is required of me, in the best manner I can. This morning the same temptation has returned, and by the grace of God, I have been enabled to convert fear into desire, and I have besought him with great

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earnestness to send me this public mortification this very morning, when I have to preach a sermon on a very solemn occasion; I ought not, however, on this account, to omit using all possible diligence in preparing myself, and delivering my discourses in the best manner I can; on the contrary, I ought to use care for this very reason, inasmuch as if I then lose my memory, I shall be certain that the humiliation comes from God, and I shall be content; whereas, if I do not exert myself, the fault will be my own. By this generous act, I appear to have overcome myself, and there is nothing which presents itself to my mind, which I am not ready to suffer for the love of God, with the assistance of his Divine grace." To these holy sentiments his actions perfectly corresponded, which were not only free from all vanity, but invariably tending to his own humiliation. He was endowed, as is well known, with excellent gifts, both of the heart and of learning, and highly versed in every department of political science; hence, he was able to adjust innumerable disputes and quarrels among the principal lords. Though thus qualified, he would never decide upon anything of moment on his own judgment, but always had recourse to the opinion of others, and he used frequently to repeat that sentence of the wise man, "Fili, sine consilio nihil facias, and post factum non penitebit." And I think that what should be mentioned in a singular manner, is his submission in matters of learning and literary composition, in regard to which, we most frequently see verified that saying of the poet, "Qui velit ingenio cedere nullus erit."

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All the world revered Father Segneri as a great master; yet, as if he had been one of the most illiterate men, he was always ready to change and retrench anything that was suggested to him by persons much inferior to him in talent and knowledge. One who was his rector for many years, attests that the father used to come to him with such great humility, as to cover him with confusion, and he seemed just like a novice, so that on many occasions, when he seemed to be desirous of mentioning something, it was necessary to encourage him to speak out. He had once requested a superior to assist him in the publication of some works at Florence; the superior made some difficulty on account of a slight inconvenience which would result to the house from such a proceeding, and Father Segneri, overwhelmed with confusion, begged pardon for the proposal, at the same time shedding such an abundance of tears, as to draw from the eyes of the superior himself tears of tenderness.

During a procession, the Litany of our Lady was being sung, and Father Segneri, going up to one of the fathers who was engaged as cantor, said to him no more than this, "You are out of tune." But to the servant of God this seemed such an excess, that the very same evening, he went to the room of this religious, and casting himself at his feet, made the most humble apology for these innocent words. The minister had given orders to the cook, to prepare a certain dish for Father Segneri, at which the cook was somewhat displeased; Father Segneri heard of the affair

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and instead of resenting this want of civility, went the next morning to him, and in the kindest manner, besought him to pardon him for the great trouble to which he was put on his account. His superiors assigned him a certain person to assist him in keeping his room in order. But the Father would not accept the aid of another, as far he could possibly dispense with it, wishing to clean and sweep with his own hands, and perform every other most vile occupation; he even endeavoured for his great humiliation, to sweep out, unknown to others, the room of his next neighbour. During the missions, he frequently washed the feet of his companions, and of many poor creatures, who came there with sordid garments, and all covered with dirt. It was his custom to rise in the morning before the rest, and having finished his prayer, even in the depth of the most severe winter, and in the last year of his life, when he was an old man in Rome, to go barefooted to the choir, and after disciplining himself most severely, he went to call one of the brothers, his confidant, kissed his feet, and humbled himself before him in many ways, all which served as his preparation for Mass; he then went directly to celebrate with this same brother, and often went so far as to make him trample upon his neck, head and face, uttering at the same time the most injurious language, to the great confusion of the good Father.

But it is by no means astonishing, that Father Segneri should act in this manner, since the opinion he had of himself was so contrary to his merits, that, seeming to forget his innocence and

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eminent virtues, he esteemed himself a vile sinner. This he frequently protested, both in public, in his sermons, and in his private conversation with his most familiar friends. Nor did these words escape his lips through a certain custom, or an affected formality, as is the case with some people, but they proceeded from the bottom of his heart, so that whenever he touched upon that subject, his countenance became suddenly inflamed, and bathed in tears. Those singular demonstrations of reverence which have been mentioned, so far from exciting in him any emotion of pride, fixed still deeper in his mind the opinion that he was a miserable sinner, and he would frequently say to the father who accompanied him, with feelings of the deepest emotion, "Oh! if they did but know me! Oh! what confusion will be my lot in the day of judgment!" At other times, fetching a sigh, he would exclaim to the same companion, "Father, do you think I shall save my soul?" When the last penitential procession was advancing, he would sometimes stop to see it pass along the road, and there, whilst leaning upon his staff, and filled with admiration at the extraordinary signs of compunction evinced by such a multitude of people, it was observed that his whole frame trembled, whilst with mournful sighs he repeated softly to himself, "Alas! poor wretch! alas! poor wretch that I am!" for he thought that these mortifications, practised by others, were a severe reproach to him for his sins, and a condemnation of his tepidity. Yet who does not know how many souls he replaced in the blessed

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path of heaven! We may without fear affirm, that the number of these, during a period of twenty-six years, which he spent in those fervent missions, would amount to many hundreds of thousands; and yet he thought himself so destitute in this respect, that he used to cry out: "Would to God that in so many years I had saved one only soul;" and in the spirit of these words, as if he were devoid of zeal for the salvation of others, he used to call himself an illegitimate son of S. Ignatius.

Undoubtedly this was, as it were, a sacred and happy enchantment of divine grace, which can make even the most perfect men look upon themselves in the light of the greatest sinners; but for my part, I consider it no less a prodigy of grace, which could inspire Father Segneri with a holy hatred of himself, and such a deep-rooted contempt, that he invariably treated himself as a great enemy, and constantly persecuted his body in a manner so dreadful, that the bare mention of them causes me to shudder. It would seem, indeed, that he ought to have been contented with those intense labours of preaching, writing, and journeying always with naked feet, those barbarous disciplines, and that abundance of blood which he every day shed for the good of his neighbour; and that he would frequently stand in need of relief for the preservation of his life; and yet, as if all this were nothing, he went on unceasingly, seeking out more and more cruel means of torturing himself: whilst what chiefly astounded his companions was, the indescribable

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delight with which he embraced these mortifications as his sweetest consolation, so that nothing could afford him greater pleasure than to discourse with him on these points, and propose to him some new practice of penance. Let us hear from his own mouth with what inflamed charity he besought God in one of those precious fruits of his prayers. "Sometimes," he says, "through Thine inscrutable judgments, which we ought rather to revere with humility than discuss with arguments, it pleases Thee to visit our order with some calamity, some persecution, or calumny, in the person of one of its members, and that on account of one all suffer, and then every body rises up against him. Ah! my good Lord, Ecce ego, mitte me. May I be that servant chosen on such an occasion, to be held up to scorn, and may others be spared who have borne this habit worthily, and, not as I have done, who have profaned it by the wickedness of my life and the dissoluteness of my manners. At other times Thy general providence will require, that a person on his journey falls into the hands of robbers, who confine him within the woods, or, sailing on the seas, he is captured by the Turks, who condemn him to slavery. Ecce ego, mitte me. May I, O Lord, may I be that servant whom Thou wilt make use of in this manner. Thou knowest well that I have frequently, even before the offering of this morning, begged with great earnestness, that in the painful life of a slave, I may do that penance for my many iniquities, which, of my own accord, I cannot resolve to do. Oh! what a happiness, if

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I could see myself loaded with chains, my flesh bruised with ill-treatment, my body half naked, and subject to a harsh master, who would every day cruelly lash me, and give me hardly sufficient food to support nature, and no bed on which to repose. Then, indeed, I might atone for the many indulgences with which I have caressed my body. In one word, I offer myself to you as the vilest of slaves, to be employed in the meanest offices. Make use of me in any cause Thou pleasest; in the sickness with which Thou visitest the world, in the mortalities, or the pestilences; and in preserving in life those who exert themselves more to promote Thine honour, deprive me of my life, because here in the world I do nothing but offend Thee, though I frequently promise and protest that I will respect Thee. This is the favour I would have Thee to grant me, if it pleases Thee to render me worthy of so much. Thus in every misfortune that shall befall me, however painful, severe, and humiliating it may be, I shall remember that then Thou art disposing of me conformably with the offering which I here make Thee, and with this reflection I shall endeavour to be at rest, and to console myself, yea, to rejoice, if Thy grace, without which I can do nothing, shall assist me therein. Thus may it be, my God. And do Thou accept this offering with the same cordiality with which I endeavour to present it to Thee."

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CHAPTER IX.

OF THE MORTIFICATIONS PRACTISED BY FATHER SEGNERI.

To give here some more particular account of his penitential austerities, I will content myself by adducing the following facts. A priest, who was a curate in the diocese of Sienna, relates, that accompanying Father Segneri, he observed in different places, that the father, naked though his feet were, instead of walking on the most agreeable part of the road, studiously sought that which was the most painful, where there were stumps of trees projecting, and sharp stones, which caused him excessive suffering. The same priest declares, that after many years he still preserved a lively remembrance of this, which excited him to sentiments of tender devotion. The father was accustomed during his missions to wash his feet several times in the day. One of his companions, through a motive of charity, advised him to desist from this custom, since, if he did so, the skin would become hardened, and he would endure less pain from walking barefooted along the stony roads; but he candidly answered, that it was for that very reason that he washed his feet, in order to have them always tender, and to be able to suffer the more intensely. The use of the discipline was always most familiar to him. When engaged about the

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missions, besides those cruel scourgings he gave himself in public, he never failed to add three or four others privately. His invariable custom in the houses of the society, was to take the discipline twice a day, and in the last years of his life, three times, in the morning, after dinner, and at evening, using for this purpose strong cords, to which he not unfrequently attached sharp points of steel, so as to draw blood from his body. On different occasions, such as any public necessity, or novenas, which he made in honour of his various patron saints, he disciplined himself more frequently, and each succeeding time greatly increased the number of blows. Whilst the cruel work of flagellation was going on, he used to repeat frequently the 'Dies Iræ,' from those words, 'Rex tremendæ majestatis,' to those of the last stanza, 'gere curam mei finis,' and struck himself with so much severity, and for so long a time, that the blows amounted to two or three thousand. As to sleep, he ordinarily devoted thereto not more than six hours, and on the missions he slept even less than that. For thirty years and upwards, until the last of his life, he always slept upon naked boards, except on the time of the missions; then, as he found the exercise of this penance too difficult, he used for some time a bed of straw; and when on account of the great esteem in which he was held, the governors and other persons of distinction, who in different places received him, provided for him excellent beds prepared with every convenience, he would accept them indeed,

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but would lay himself down to rest upon the straw alone, and it was not without much difficulty that he could be prevailed upon to make use of a mattress. At other times it was his custom to sleep upon a hair cloth, which he strewed over the bed in the manner of a towel; but as that hindered him from taking the sleep which was absolutely necessary for him, he was obliged to desist from this mortification also. In regard to eating, as has been mentioned above, Father Segneri was not capable of strict fasting, and his companions relate, that whilst busied in the missions,having some times fasted several days successively on occasion of the Ember days, or the like, he suffered in consequence to such a degree, that he was seized with a fever. On this account, that he might be able to continue his holy labours, he thought it would tend more to the glory of God that he should eat as much as his weakness required, contenting himself with abstaining from dainty meats, and denying his appetite what it sought after the most greedily. However, even in the point of eating, it cannot be questioned that he exercised acts of great generosity, and he was observed to chew the most disgusting things, even ashes themselves.

Equally painful was his style of dress; during fourteen years whilst he lived in the houses of the Society, he never wore either shirt or trowsers, but in place of them a coarse sackcloth without sleeves, extending from his shoulders down to his knees, and interwoven with goat's hair, altogether very similar to what is used by carriers

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to cove their goods. Father Segneri was so attached to this sort of hair-cloth, that whenever it began to grow the least soft, he would lay it aside, and procure another rougher still. During the last years, however, that he dwelt here at Rome, as in summer time that style of dress caused him the most insufferable heat, and the abundant perspiration that ensued produced a very disagreeable smell; he substituted for it a kind of hemp cloth, rough beyond measure, and covered with sharp points, which pierced his body in every part, as may be seen from one of those cloths which is kept for the common edification in our noviciate. Thus upon his arms he had a simple serge covering, and his legs, being without stockings, were entirely naked; and that people might not take notice of this, he wore a sort of shoes made for the purpose, somewhat higher than ordinary, and reaching a little above the instep. Such a poor defence then, for his arms and legs, occasioned the poor father, during the rigours of winter, excessive cold, which made him tremble all over; especially as he was by nature so sensitive to cold, that he confessed to a friend, that, in the beginning of his reform at Perugia, after having taken a severe discipline early in the morning, when he put on his cold shirt, he was forced to cry out from the excessive pain he felt. Notwithstanding all this, he used moreover, in the midst of winter, to shut himself up in his room, especially after mass, and there almost naked throw himself on his knees shivering before the crucifix, and beg pardon for his sins, at the

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same time pouring forth a torrent of tears, and striking his breast with one of those instruments made of cork, two of which were found after his happy death, and one of them yet stained with fresh blood. But what is still more astonishing, Father Pinamonti, his confessor and companion, attests that Father Segneri used to roll himself naked in the snow in our court at Piacenza: and he relates as a fact well known to him, that whilst the two were in the Carthusian monastery at Lucca, where they had gone to go through their usual spiritual exercises, Father Segneri rolled himself naked among the thorns, making use for that purpose of a bed of roses in the garden adjoing the room which was assigned him. Father Pinamonti adds, that he had reason to believe on very sure grounds, that both of these acts of mortification were practised by Father Segneri more than once. Here I cannot refrain from begging the devout reader to consider for a time what zeal, what heroic charity these actions necessarily suppose, which are recorded among the most remarkable of the greatest saints of the church, as S. Benedict, and S. Francis the Seraphic. To render himself more and more like to his crucified Lord, Father Segneri wore hanging from his neck a small wooden cross, furnished with a number of nails, the points of which projecting from the cross, were turned to his breast, and very frequently he would press his hand upon his breast, thereby forcing the nails to pierce deep into his flesh. He also procured to be made an iron instrument curved and indented in the manner

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of a saw, and whilst he was studying for many hours together in our colleges, he would tie this terrible instrument under his thighs, which, when the weight of his body thus pressed upon it, caused him the most excruciating pain. And, in fine, that no single part of his body might be without torment, he bound his sides, chest, thighs, arms, and shoulders, with a number of small chains armed with sharp points, which after his death remained in his room, and it was observed that the chains were about thirty-five spans in length, and the pricks amounted to three thousand eight hundred.

To others all this might easily appear an indiscreet severity, but that generous heart, not content with maltreating his body himself, would even procure the assistance of others for the purpose. That secular priest who was the constant companion of the father in the missions, deposes on his oath, that when the father had acquired a very familiar confidence in him, he begged a favour of him, which he said he greatly needed. It was this: that with his own hand he would scourge him without mercy, declaring that the more severe he was towards him, the more he would show his real attachment. Horrified at this so strange a request, the good priest for some time refused, and as much as he could declined so unwelcome a task. But at last, overcome by repeated solicitations, he yielded and complied with his wishes; whereupon Father Segneri, naked as far as modesty would permit, laid himself down, and the faithful friend, with

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a discipline of twisted cords having twelve lashes, and sometimes with small chains of iron or brass, beat him with all his might in every part of the body, and particularly on the stomach, as Father Segneri expressly enjoined him, because that part is most tender and sensitive than others. Thus he continued for about half an hour, and sometimes three quarters, to such an extent, that a new discipline would be destroyed in three or four times; nor was this cruel scene brought to a close in general until the companion, wearied with exhaustion, begged that for the love of God he might cease. Then Father Segneri would throw himself on his knees to kiss his feet, and pressing his hand in token of affection, would say, "I thank you for your great charity, and I pray God that He will reward you." Sometimes he would cause himself to be beaten with his hands tied behind his back, and bound to one of the bed-posts, in imitation of the scourging of Jesus Christ; and if he found the pain insupportable, he would raise his eyes with an amorous look to heaven, and exclaim, "O Jesus, O Jesus." He continued to endure, or rather to enjoy, for it was a real delight to him, this cruel treatment for the space of twelve years during the time of his missions almost every day that some extraordinary occurrences did not prevent it. Even when he was an old man here in Rome he entreated one of our brothers to extend to him the same charity, but the latter had not the courage, and the good father remained inconsolable on that account. The aforementioned priest

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relates, that in Bologna Father Segneri was ordered by the physicians to take baths, on account of the excessive heat of his blood, and after the bath he would be scourged more than ever, because the flesh, being then tender, was more sensible to pain, and he thought he ought not to lose such an excellent opportunity of merit. The father was on another occasion in one of our villas on the sea coast without the gates of Ancona, where, on account of the smallness of the house, and the great number of inmates, he had not the means of practising this his no less dear than painful recreation, so he went down with his companion to certain rocks at a distance, and there stripping himself, he received a severe flagellation as usual. On one of these occasions he even wished to be trodden under foot, and as the other objected to this proposal, the father encouraged him to it by saying, "What great thing is it to trample upon a poor worm like myself?"

But another means which Father Segneri invented to satisfy the excess of his fervour, appears to me a still greater martyrdom. Stretching himself naked, as we have remarked before, on the bed, he caused boiling wax to be dropped all over his body, especially upon his stomach; and the priest who accompanied him, attests that he gave him this cruel torture at least a hundred times. The pain must have been greatly aggravated, when the father tore off the wax, as this could not be done without drawing the skin along with it. Whether Father Segneri continued to punish himself in this manner here in Rome, where he

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perhaps could not procure a person to assist him in this practice, cannot be declared with certainty. This, however, is known, that after his death there were found in his room some ends of torches and balls of wax which he kept concealed for that purpose. It frequently happened that his companion, overcome with pity, raised his hand that the burning wax, falling from a greater height, might cause less pain: but the father perceived this compassionate scheme, so prejudicial to himself, and grasping his arm, he made him immediately lower it. In like manner, whilst in the act of inflicting the discipline on him, his companion would pretend to strike with great severity, and yet let the strokes fall very gently; but he who was ever vigilant began to complain bitterly, for he thought this was not a matter to trifle in, where his salvation was concerned, and he was making atonement to God for his crimes. The same priest relates upon oath a fact which he observed to his great astonishment, that though the body of Father Segneri was on these occasions covered with wounds, bruises, and sores, and in the ordinary course of nature would require a considerable length of time to heal, yet, without any kind of human remedy, his flesh appeared on the following day fair, beautiful, and sound; and the same was observed by many in regard to those cruel disciplines, which the father during the missions, many times in the day, inflicted on himself in public. Hence I am inclined to believe that for the greater glory of his servant, God wished from him these daily sacrifices; and that he might be

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able to offer them, God Himself invariably cured them with His own hand, in a most singular manner. But not even here could the generous heart of Father Segneri rest, never satisfied with suffering. In reading the life of some saint, he met with one of the most extraordinary mortifications I ever heard of; and he who was always hunting after such like penances, was anxious to imitate it without delay. It was the following. He tied round his arms above the elbow certain cords, and attaching these to some beam in the garret, or a nail well secured in the wall, he suspended himself thereby in the air, remaining in this painful situation so long as he could recite the seven penitential Psalms. The torture must certainly have been extreme, both from the great weight of his body, thus violently supported, and because the cords, piercing into the flesh, cut his arms and penetrated so far as to make the blood spout forth. Not content with this even, he would give himself sudden and heavy jerks; and whilst hanging there nearly naked, he would frequently cause himself to be scourged from head to foot, and when, at last, he came to the ground, he would still receive a fresh discipline. That priest protests that at the earnest request of the father, he was compelled to repeat that barbarous scene at least a hundred times; and we know for certain that Father Segneri here in Rome, though now spent with age and labours, was accustomed to practice this kind of martyrdom, having succeeded in finding one of our brothers, who, with great charity assisted him in applying this awful torture. What was his princi-

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pal motive for such unheard-of chastisements, with which he punished his body, we learn from one of these writings, in which Father Segneri, all enamoured with his God, speaks thus: "Our Lord has this morning communicated to me a great affection for penance, which I have to perform, not so much in satisfaction as in punishment for my sins. By this I do not pretend to satisfy for those temporal punishments, which either in this or the next life are due to me, on their account; I have rather to take vengeance on myself for so many outrages committed against God. This is the flesh, for the indulgence of which I have been so disloyal and irreverent towards God, and on this I have to execute justice. I have to punish this palate, these eyes, all these my senses, and, in fine, I have to punish my whole self. Do Thou, my God, permit me this treatment, for it seems to me but too just: and can I let pass unpunished so much ingratitude which I have shewn Thee, so many affronts, and so many insults? What man on earth could allow them to pass, if I had committed them against him? It is not, O my God, a slight favour that Thou pardon me entirely the fault, (which I beseech Thee to do, that I may not be a creature deprived for ever of life), but why shouldest Thou withhold the punishment?"

By these severe chastisements Father Paul Segneri acquired for himself such a rich fund of merits, and left to us such an illustrious treasure of examples. He mortified his flesh by these austerities, even to the end of his life, and at the same time invigorated his spirit. By these means

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likewise, he ever guarded and increased those eminent virtues of his, particularly that wonderful innocence and immaculate purity of both body and soul, which made him be esteemed as an angel on earth by whoever knew him. Hence all his companions on the missions protested that it gave them a singular delight to see a man who was by nature possessed of very warm and affectionate feelings, familiarly treat, for so many years, as much as was necessary, with all classes of men and women, both in cities and country places, and yet remain so pure and unstained, that there did not appear in him the least shadow of sin, nor did he even seem capable of certain attachments which so easily grow upon persons, even of eminent virtue. And for this reason we may say, that God conferred upon Father Segneri that prodigious favour which was granted to the three children in the fiery furnace, "Non tetigit eos omnino ignis, neque contristavit." Let us, then, render due thanks to the Giver of all good gifts, that He has been pleased to adorn His faithful minister with so many graces, and to bring him thus to His glory in heaven, where, praised by whole armies of souls that have been saved by his means, I believe that he will sit exalted the more highly, as in his humility he deemed himself deserving of the lowest place.

And if the devout reader laments that the merits of a man so esteemed in the world have been too scantily described, let him attribute it chiefly to Father Segneri himself, who studied nothing so eagerly as to hide himself from the

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eyes of men, and to appear like an ordinary person, although he was so far superior to the generality of others, knowing well that celebrated remark of S. Gregory, "Depr\u0153dari desiderat, que thesaurum publice portat in viâ."

LAUS DEO SEMPER.

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THE LIFE AND VIRTUES

OF

FATHER PETER PINAMONTI,

MISSIONARY OF THE SOCIETY OF JESUS.

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THE LIFE AND VIRTUES

OF

FATHER PETER PINAMONTI

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CHAPTER I.

HIS BIRTH AND LIFE IN THE WORLD.

PETER PINAMONTI was born at Pistoja, a city of Tuscany, in the year 1632, on the 27th of December, on which day the Church celebrates the festival of S. John the Evangelist. His father's name was Giovanni Pinamonti del Torchio, an illustrious and noble Tuscan family. He was twice married, and had several children, both boys and girls, from his first union; his second wife, who was Caterina Campanelli, bore him no other fruit than Peter; and as his father died when the child was only two years old, Peter remained under the care of Caterina, who brought him up with the tenderness of an affectionate mother, and the piety of a truly Christian lady.

The excellent qualities of the child, who was remarkable for his lively disposition and great

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docility of manners, endeared him so far to Caterina, that after she had engaged in a second marriage, she would always have him with her, exerting all her endeavours to preserve him free from the vices common to that tender and dangerous age, and to instil into his breast sentiments of devotion. When he had arrived at a proper age, she sent him to pursue his studies to our college at Pistoja, that he might the better receive a good literary and moral education. How Peter conducted himself in those more dangerous years of his youth has not been left recorded, and all those who had the happiness of knowing and treating familiarly with him in his early life are now dead. But though we have no evidence from those who were witnesses of his early career, yet may we in some measure gather the truth from what was brought to light in the latter days of his life. The confessor who heard the general confession which Father Pinamonti made the very year in which he died, beginning with the earliest dawn of the use of reason, asserts, as his confident belief, that he preserved unspotted through the whole course of his life that innocence which he brought from the sacred waters of baptism. And in estimating the value of this innocence, we should not forget his natural temperament, which was irritable, and the many dangerous snares which the world would set to entrap his virtue. Hence we may learn how constant a guard he kept over all his senses, how assiduous he was in his pious exercises, and how diligent and devout in frequenting the sacraments; for

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without these assistances the innocence of thoughtless youth is but too easily dashed upon the rocks, and miserably shipwrecked.

It pleased God that a soul so lovely and precious should not remain long subjected to the wretched slavery of the world; and with a sweet, and at the same time, efficacious voice, He inspired him with a resolution to abandon all earthly concerns, and devote himself entirely to the divine service in our society. The youth embraced with joy this inspiration from heaven, and was encouraged in his design by the fathers of the society, who, judging from his eminent qualities, considered him a very likely person to promote the salvation of souls. His relations, however, immediately set themselves to work to oppose and speak against the design; thereby imitating the foolish practice of many, who when any one of their relatives is intending to embrace a religious life, think themselves dishonoured if they do not make some opposition. Many and severe were the attacks which Peter had to sustain from his friends, who, with reasons drawn from worldly philosophy, strenuously endeavoured to divert him from the projected step. But seeing the youth more firm than a rock, and that all their attempts to steal him away from God were utterly fruitless, rendered ingenious by a consideration of worldly interest, they attempted to deprive him of his lawful possessions.

One of his relations, more ardent and resolved than the rest, undertook to prevail upon Peter by fair words and flattering speeches, to make

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a full renouncement of all that he possessed in favour of a certain individual whom he named, previously to his becoming a religious man. To all his entreaties a deaf ear was turned; threatening language was next tried, and he went so far as to protest, in the name of the whole family, that he should never be allowed to leave his home with the intention of embracing a religious life, until he had previously disposed of his whole inheritance in the manner required.

All that this unworthy relation could do failed altogether in shaking the constancy of Peter; and, with a firmness superior to his years, he resolutely declared that it still continued to be his unflinching determination to give himself up entirely to God. He further added, that he would leave his possessions to the person intimated to him by God, conformably with the dictates of reason and honesty. This resolute reply from one so young, (Peter had but just passed his fourteenth year), roused a flame of anger and revenge in the breast of the wicked man, who immediately concluded that such an answer was the result rather of the advice of others than his own natural feelings. His first proceeding, accordingly, was to obtain from his mother a prohibition of her son's attending our schools, or having any communication with the fathers of the College. Not content with this, he began to insult and treat with all kinds of abuse those fathers who dwelt at Pistoja, more especially the rector; calumniating him on every occasion, and spreading the most disgraceful reports that his anger, which now amounted to fury,

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could suggest. The report of these injuries spread so far, that the Signor Commissario of the city thought it his duty to collect information on the matter, and by a speedy reparation to restore tranquillity. From the beginning he had been decidedly averse to the resolution of the youth, and especially opposed to our fathers, either from his natural inclination, or from mis-statements which had been propagated by the relations. But when he called Peter into his presence, and had listened to his reasons, which he explained with a vigour and maturity of judgment surprising in a boy of his age, he admired his constancy in his vocation, praised his motives for not making the renouncement of his property according to the views of his relatives; and imposed a strict injunction on his friends, not to give him the least uneasiness of any sort whatever, or hinder his entering the service of God in the Society. God Himself wished to interpose in this affair, and by an exemplary chastisement to show in what abhorrence He holds those who do not fear to insult His servants, and put obstacles in the way of such as are called to a religious life. The primary author of this disturbance died by a thrust of a sword in less than a year, without the consolation of any of the sacraments, and without evincing any signs of a reconciliation with his offended God.

Victorious now over the opposition on the part of his friends, Peter had yet greater difficulty in overcoming the resistance of his mother,

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who could by no means prevail upon herself to part with such a beloved son. Every time that he renewed his entreaties to obtain her permission, she returned no other answer than sobs and tears, which flowed in great abundance from the eyes of Caterina; for, on the one hand, she had to contend against her maternal affection, which could not consent to part with so much good; and, on the other, religion presented itself to her, obliging her to return to God what she had received but as a gift from God. Nor was this struggle less painful to the tender heart of Peter, who, having fully satisfied the duties of respect and filial love which he considered he owed to his mother, resolved at length to force asunder those ties which could not be unloosed; and, setting out one day secretly from Pistoja, he directed his steps towards Rome. Thus he hesitated not to displease and disobey her who had given him his temporal birth, in order to please and obey the God to whom he owed his creation. This unexpected flight of her dear son pierced with grief the tender heart of Caterina. But, like a wise and virtuous matron, she soon resigned herself entirely to the dispensations of Divine Providence, and offered herself unreservedly to the will of Heaven. For this act of resignation she desired to be rewarded by our Lord in this life, with the consolation of seeing her son labour for many years in the holy missions, transformed, I may say, into an apostle; and, at her death, to be assisted with the power-

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ful aid of five thousand masses, which were applied to her intention by the liberality of the Father-General, in regard of the merits of Father Peter.

CHAPTER II.

HIS NOVICIATE AND STUDIES.

PETER entered his noviciate at Rome before he had yet completed his fifteenth year, on the 7th of October, 1647; and his joy on this occasion was proportionable to the extent of the obstacles that had been put in the way of his leaving the world, and of his dedicating himself to the service of God. Of the fervour with which he commenced the career of his religious life, we have a few particulars recorded, which represent him to us externally as bearing a modest and pleasing countenance, giving himself entirely to the study of sincere mortification, and exerting all his efforts to acquire the virtues proper to that age, and his present condition of novice. In a few months, the universal opinion with regard to him was, that he had left most of his fellow novices far behind in the practice of religious perfection. How earnestly he strove in the school of probation to cultivate his interior, and resist the inclinations of corrupt nature, may be easily gathered from two facts. First, from the continual advance he made in the attain-

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ment of the most perfect virtues through a space of fifty-six years: for it is impossible to erect a noble building without first laying deep and solid foundations. And it is a universally received opinion among men the most experienced in the art of forming the minds of youths, that, though we frequently find those who have been fervent novices fall into tepidity, yet it is a thing of rare occurrence, nay, almost miraculous, to see tepid and indifferent novices become in course of time fervent and exemplary. The second fact is, that he applied himself so ardently to the study of the maxims of the Gospel, and fixed his thoughts so intensely and continually on the consideration of eternity, (which is the main support of the spiritual life, and of all religious perfection), that in a short time he contracted such a severe pain in his head, that it accompanied him without any intermission even to the grave. So grievous was this indisposition of the head, aggravated by continual weakness and inflammation, that it would not permit him to apply to reading for half an hour; and this not only in his younger days, but also for many years in his advanced life.

Habitual complaints in youth are commonly enemies to the observance of regular discipline, and the occasion of many exemptions. But our good Peter, from his incessant pains drew a motive for attending even with greater assiduity to acquire perfection and all heroic virtues. He availed himself of this indisposition to avoid all the more honourable duties and employments,

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and all the more magnificent functions; but he never took advantage of it to withdraw himself from the ordinary duties of community life, or relax his first fervour; and he supplied for the weakness of his head by the vigour of his mind. Whether novice, student, or priest, he was always the same; no difference could be remarked in Peter between his early career and his more advanced life, except that he was continually advancing in the path of perfection.

Having completed the two years of his noviciate, and being united to the society by the usual vows, he passed to the study of rhetoric; but his head was so feeble and ill adapted for close application, that before he commenced his Philosophy, it was thought necessary to send him to teach in the college of Città di Castello, and that of Pistoja, his native city. The tedious fatigue he there underwent, being employed five hours every day in instructing children in the first rudiments of grammar, served admirably to exercise his unwearied patience. But nothing could relieve his head; and it was found necessary to recall him to pass through his course of Philosophy in the Collegio Romano; where he displayed no less his eminent virtue than his superior talents.

He was possessed of such a clear and ready genius, that by simply hearing one of his companions read over the lesson which had been dictated in school by the master, he immediately understood the whole learning of the question, penetrated at a single glance the point of the

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difficulty, and answered the arguments against it, with a quickness that excited the admiration of all; so that he was esteemed the first in his course, and declared the best among the numerous body of young men who attend that illustrious and flourishing university. Indeed he was a striking proof of the correctness of that sentiment of our holy founder S. Ignatius, who used to say, that a powerful mind joined to a weak body was more capable and better disposed to accomplish great things than a weak mind joined to a robust body; for the virtue and power of the mind suffer no diminution from the debility of the members, just as the diamond loses neither its value nor brilliancy when enchased in lead. It was the eminence of his virtues, however, that called forth still higher admiration than his talents; and, fortified by these, in the midst of the general applause of the whole Collegio Romano, he abated not in the least his fervent course, nor suffered the pleasures of speculative pursuits to dry up the devotion of his heart, as is the case with many young students. It was a spectacle truly worthy of that noble theatre, to see a youth of such a lively turn of mind, yet so composed in his demeanour; of such rare talents, and yet so modest; requiring special relief to allay the pains in his head, and yet so conformable in everything to the practices of the community. His desire to bestow commendations on others was equal to his abhorrence of his own praise; under all circumstances he placed himself below every one, as if he had been inferior to all. In

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his behaviour towards others he was affable and mild; but always mortified in his senses, modest in his eyes, and scanty in his words. There was never heard to proceed from his mouth any, even the slightest murmur or complaint of any sort: and whenever he heard from any of his companions any thing unbecoming, he would modestly direct a simple glance towards the offender, and by his silence put an end to the discourse.

To this well regulated exterior, he joined the strictest attention to the interior man, and as in his application to study, he supplied for the weakness of his head by his eminent talents, thus did he avail himself of the strength of his mind to acquire the true science of the Saints. He lost not a moment of the time set apart by the rules for the things of God, and the exercises of devotion. Though his head would not permit him to fix his mind for any length of time in meditation on the eternal truths; yet, by the assistance of divine grace, and his own strenuous endeavours, he arrived at an intimate knowledge of celestial things, and the attributes of God. And it was a subject of no small wonder to hear a youth discourse in sublime language on the divine mysteries, and draw from all things devout sentiments and admirable considerations, with equal talent and unction.

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CHAPTER III.

HE RENOUNCES HIS STUDIES, AND MAKES HIS PROFESSION OF THE THREE VOWS.

Peter continued two years in this immaculate manner of life, pursuing the studies of Logic and Physics; but his head was so afflicted, that unable any longer to endure the intense pain, joined to the debility under which he laboured, he was advised by the physicians to have recourse to a change of climate, and pass over to Naples. After a long trial of that mild and salubrious air, he could still find no relief for his head; but for his soul he derived great advantage, giving himself up to a total denial of self, and to the gaining of an heroic degree of humility. Seeing that there were now no hopes of recovering from his complaint, he determined at the foot of the crucifix to abandon the schools, to renounce all ideas of professorships, in order to serve our Lord in the capacity of spiritual assistant in the most despised and lowly duties, which, in fact, he obtained by means of earnest prayers, and repeated solicitations of his superiors.

It called forth the greatest astonishment, that he should thus formally renounce the whole Collegio Romano, where the readiness and brilliancy of his talents were so well known, and where, in spite of his malady, he might have pursued his studies with success, and obtained greater

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applause than any of his companions. But those who knew the virtues of Father Peter, showed no astonishment at this renouncement; for they knew that it had been matured by the light of divine, rather than human reasons, and that it proceeded not from the weakness of his head, but the strength of his mind. And I know that after this renouncement, he was advised by many of his friends to stand his examination in Theology and Philosophy, in order to be admitted to the profession of the four vows, as is customary with our fathers. This would have cost him comparatively little labour; however, he absolutely refused to follow their advice, not wishing to be declared capable of teaching scholastic learning in the first chairs of our universities, without having ever applied to it as a scholar. One father of great influence even insinuated to him his wish to obtain for him from the father-general the solemn profession of the four vows, without the accustomed examination, in consideration of his talents and great merits, as is sometimes, but very rarely, done in the case of remarkable subjects. To this proposal he did not even condescend to reply, so contrary was it to his spirit of true humility, which made him ambitious to be esteemed by all as a mere simpleton, with very little talent, and still less learning.

Meanwhile he was sent by his superiors to his native air, as a last resource to alleviate those pains which seemed to bid defiance to every other remedy. In the College of Pistoja he took holy orders, and was occupied many years in the

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duties of minister and procurator of the college, and of Monte Tuscolo. Under these distracting cures, his principal aim was the exercise of patience joined with humility. There was no duty so fatiguing in the house or in the country that he did not readily undertake, and the more ignoble it was, the more willingly did he embrace it: there was no father or brother whom he did not prefer to himself on every occasion, esteeming himself inferior to all in all things, and so much inferior, that he thought it is duty to become the servant of all. He found in every one else much to praise and to admire; in himself he could see nothing but matter for confusion and reproach. And, thus writing to the father-general, as is customary every year, to give an account of their administration and the subjects in the house, he praises every one and debases himself alone.

This obscure kind of life he followed up to 1665, in which year, on the 2nd of February, he was promoted to the profession of the three solemn vows. There are few priests in the society who profess the three vows; because when they possess all the requisites insisted upon by our constitutions, they make profession of four vows, which constitute the main part of the religious life. When some of the requisites are wanting, they enter the class of spiritual assistants, who take three public but simple vows. Some few, however, are promoted to the profession of the three solemn vows; and they are such as do not reach the highest rank of the

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four vows, but have a special merit to be more strictly incorporated in the society. Now Father Pinamonti was advanced to this rank, on account of his eminent virtue and his services at the college of Pistoja, for he did not take the four vows on account of having abandoned his studies.

CHAPTER IV.

FATHER PINAMONTI UNDERTAKES THE MISSIONS WITH FATHER PAUL SEGNERI.

From the year in which Father Peter devoted himself solemnly to God, by the profession of the three vows, it pleased our Lord that his talents and virtues should no longer remain buried, but that he should be brought out in public, to labour for the gaining of souls in the holy missions. From the time the father began this glorious undertaking he never interrupted it for thirty-eight years which he survived, happily terminating his holy life in the midst of the fatigues of this apostolic ministry.

At this time Father Paul Segneri, inflamed with zeal for the glory of God and the salvation of souls, was preaching the Lent in the principal cities of Italy with equal fruit and applause; and inspired by a manifest impulse from heaven to devote himself unreservedly to the sacred missions, he resolved to join to the labours attendant on his preaching the holy time of Lent, the no

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less laborious task of this ministry. Having obtained the approbation and full consent of his superiors, he began this undertaking, so glorious to God and profitable to the souls of men, in the year 1665. Father Peter was assigned to him as a companion in his labours, and not without a particular dispensation of divine providence; for it would have been beyond the reach of human penetration to discover two souls so conformable to one another in disposition, and in zeal for the glory of God. From the very first day they met they experienced a mutual love and veneration for one another, which was so intense both in heart and will, that the divine hand alone could have united them, and by it alone could they be separated by death.

I might here say much on the fatigues which he endured, and the fruit which this father reaped in the missions which he gave in company with Father Segneri for the space of twenty-six successive years, passing through and sanctifying the entire dioceses of Lucca, Piacenza, Faenza, Modena and Parma, of Mantova, Reggio, Novantola, Carpi, Arezzo, and Bologna, together with Pescia, Genova, Albenga, Ancona, and Larzana: without mentioning the dioceses of Brescia, Lodi, Fermo, Sinigaglia, Savona, Bertinoro, and Ventimiglia, where they only preached in parts. But as an account of these labours has been already given in the life of Father Segneri, I shall content myself here with describing in short what was peculiar to Father Peter; or, though common to both, what has been designedly omitted by the author of that

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life, in order that the humble Father Pinamonti may be exhibited in glowing colours.

And in the first place, they endured in common the inconveniences of travelling through the extremes of heat and cold, assailed by furious winds and drenching rains, along stony cutting paths, and over lofty mountains; in common, they subjected themselves to the pains of walking constantly with naked feet, often bleeding and torn by the briars and sharp stones; and, in common, they punished themselves with disciplines and other austerities, endured toils and fatigues, without allowing themselves any respite for six months in the year, from Easter to the month of November. In the Penitential processions Father Pinamonti used to walk in front of all, bearing aloft in his left hand a black banner, on which were inscribed in large characters, "Oh! Hell! O! Repentance!" whilst with his right hand he most cruelly scourged his shoulders, from which the blood fell in large drops.

In enduring these severe penitential exercises, Father Segneri was supported by a strong constitution and robust frame, whereas Father Pinamonti was enfeebled by a naturally delicate constitution, and the racking pains he endured in his head. Father Segneri persevered in these laborious practices for twenty-six years; but Father Pinamonti prolonged them to the space of thirty-eight, and until he arrived at the advanced age of seventy-one years. The more laborious occupations of the ministry of Father Segneri were at times interrupted by repose; Father

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Pinamonti, on the other hand, was continually employed in his duties from the early dawn of morning, to a very late hour at night, admitting no relaxation but what was absolutely necessary for the support of the body. Hence, whenever Father Segneri met with any of his friends who began to compassionate him for the great fatigues he underwent, he would immediately say in reply: "The labours of Father Pinamonti are at least double mine." Not only did these two fathers go hand in hand in the toils of the missions, but the fruits also, which consisted in innumerable souls gained to our Lord, were common to both; for both the one and the other exerted themselves to make their harvest of souls the more abundant.

The particular ministry of Father Segneri was preaching; that of Father Pinamonti, catechizing and hearing confessions. And, indeed, so zealously did he embrace these two branches of his ministry, and so assiduously did he acquit himself of them, that the very last steps he took before he was seized by his mortal sickness, were to proceed to the place where he was to give catechism, and the last words he uttered before he expired, were those of the sacramental absolution, given to his companion. Nor can I pronounce for certain whether this should be considered as a powerful argument of the affectionate love he had for these two employments, or a manifest proof of the approbation of God, who granted him strength to persevere in these duties to his last breath.

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CHAPTER V.

HIS INSTRUCTIONS.

From all quarters we have heard wonderful things related of him as a catechist, and still more wonderful, as a confessor. In his instructions, he explained the principal points of divine faith, and the most important maxims of a good life, with such brevity and clearness, such facility and yet depth of knowledge, that he instructed the ignorant, gratified the learned, and astonished all who heard him, by his wonderful skill in explaining the most exalted mysteries in a few words, and in a style so simple, that even the most illiterate could fully understand him. He began his catechetical lesson by a simple instruction, adapted to the understanding and the wants of the children. Then, by a pleasing transition, he passed on to treat of subjects that were interesting and necessary for all, such as the commandments and sacraments: intermixing examples and anecdotes with more solid reasoning, and joining practical to speculative instruction, so as to render clear the errors which are frequently committed in observing the Divine law, and in the use of the sacraments, especially that of holy confession.

His particular excellence was in embracing much matter in a few words, and explaining the point proposed in clear short instructions; enlivening them at one time with ingenious and clever

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comparisons, at another, with curious and varied facts, so as to impress the subject on the minds and hearts of his audience. The most obscure points, and the most sublime mysteries of faith, he taught by means of material and sensible images, thus reducing them to the capacity of the dullest understandings. Men of high note, and eminent for their learning, never ceased to admire, how skilfully in his catechisms he accommodated himself to the wise and the illiterate; framing his instructions so as to serve for the benefit of every class of persons, as the light which accommodates itself to all the varieties of colour. His instructions derived still brighter lustre and utility from the sweetness of affability, the modesty and humility with which he spoke; captivating the eyes of his audience not less than their ears, so that all seemed to fancy they saw an angel, who had been sent from heaven to instruct them. Father Segneri, in giving an account of these instructions to the father-general, speaks of them in these terms: "I have not words wherewith to describe to you, reverend father, how excellently Father Pinamonti discharges the duty of instructing the people; leaving to me the ministry of preaching, as I leave entirely to him that of catechizing. All who hear are struck with astonishment, and I long to inform you with all sincerity, that I know not where I should find another like him." And it is almost incredible with what ardour Father Segneri, in every sermon he gave in the missions, exhorted the whole people to be present at these instructions.

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But, indeed, there was little need of invitations, for his fame went before him, and all felt inflamed with an ardent thirst to be nourished by his words; all, I say, of every age and condition of life, and persons of both sexes; boys and girls, young and old, citizens and husbandmen, nobles and plebeians, cavaliers and ladies. So great was the multitude of his auditors, that the only way to accommodate them, was to address them crowded together in the open country, as the churches, though very large, were found incapable of holding such a vast concourse. In the missions, which were given about the Riviera di Genova, in the year 1688, many pious ladies came from a distance of ten or twenty miles, principally to listen to the catechistical instructions of Father Pinamonti. They anticipated the hours of breakfast, in order to arrive in time to find room in the midst of such a multitude; nor did they complain of having to stand hours upon hours, exposed to the heat of the burning sun, or the inclemency of the winds and rains, so eager were they to participate in the fruits of these instructions. It was a subject of the highest astonishment to see such a crowd observing the most strict silence and universal attention, all standing with their eyes immoveably fixed on the good father, and their minds wrapt in an ecstacy of delight. And if the hours set apart for catechism were expected with impatience, and spent in the most unbounded consolation, there were certainly none, who did

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not go away with an intense desire to listen again to the father.

The fruit, however, of his instructions, was greater than the pleasure afforded. Father Segneri esteemed them so important and useful, that he repeatedly proclaimed to the people from the pulpit, that if there were any, who from necessary and urgent occupations, were unable to attend all the exercises of the mission, they might omit to be present at the sermons, but by no means absent themselves from the catechism; having from long experience discovered this to be not only the means best adopted to teach all sorts of people the true method of living virtuously, but also the most efficacious way of moving the hearts of men to true penance, and of conducting them in the paths of salvation, with less outward tumult and greater effect.

Now, the fruit of these instructions was not confined to those particular dioceses in which the missions were preached, but may be said to have spread in a certain manner over the whole of Italy. For numbers of priests, both seculars and fathers of our society, showed the greatest eagerness to procure copies of the above discourses, anxious to make them their pattern and guide under the like circumstances. And long ago they would have been committed to print for the general profit, had not Father Pinamonti resolutely opposed such a project. One manuscript volume of these writings happened to fall into my hands, and after having made a hasty perusal of the first part, I was so charmed with

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the work, that I could not rest satisfied until I had read the whole carefully through, with the utmost avidity and delight. It was afterwards proposed to me, that these instructions should be at length brought to light and published; but there is reason to fear that in many places the originals have been materially corrupted, either from the negligence of the writers, or the inadvertence of the compiler.

CHAPTER VI.

HIS MINISTRY OF HEARING CONFESSIONS.

STILL more laborious and fruitful was the other portion of the duties of Father Pinamonti, that of hearing confessions; and he applied himself with such indefatigable patience to this arduous occupation, that he never left the confessional day or night, except to say mass or give instructions, or afford necessary relief to his body by a scanty meal and a short sleep. It was generally esteemed miraculous, the length of time he used to continue hearing his penitents. Whoever knew the weakness he felt in his head, which was so great that he could not endure to spend even half an hour in his own room in close application, would be amazed to see him remain such an extraordinary length of time in the confessional, motionless as a statue. Overpowered by long journeys made with naked feet, and exposed to the heat of the sun in its greatest intensity, or

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frequently quite drenched with rain, he never hesitated to go and shut himself up in the confessional, there to pass the days and nights in the midst of the crowd, and under the influence of the oppression caused by the heat and closeness of the atmosphere, which would have been enough to harass the heads of the strongest men. Yet our wonder ceases when we come to know the remedy which the father in secret applied to his weakness, in order to support a labour so painful, that even the strongest constitutions eventually yield under its weight.

The first time that Father Pinamonti set out on the missions along with Father Segneri, into the diocese of Lucca, he experienced, whilst hearing confessions, so severe a pain and racking anguish in the head, that he thought it was quite impossible that he could continue any longer in that occupation, so directly opposed to the feeble state of his constitution. So ardent, however, was the desire he felt in his breast to sacrifice himself for the good of his neighbour, that he applied no small violence to himself, forcing his poor head by a most extraordinary generosity of heart to continue under the burthen, as a stubborn animal is urged on by means of blows. This violence he soon discovered served no other end than to overpower and effectually ruin his head, and he now had recourse to Heaven for a more efficacious remedy. Turning, with sentiments of the most humble affection to his special advocate and beloved apostle, S. Francis Xavier, he besought him in terms of the most earnest

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supplication to obtain for him so much relief to his head, that he might be enabled to continue in the exercise of that laborious duty of hearing confessions; and at the same time he expressly vowed to the saint, that if this grace were granted him, he would spend the labours and fatigues of his whole life in the holy missions, unless withdrawn therefrom by obedience. The earnest petitions of his client were speedily heard by the apostle, and he obtained for him the desired assistance; but in a manner which for the space of thirty-eight years appeared an incessant miracle. When out of the confessional he was afflicted in the same manner as before with the indisposition in the head, which prevented him from applying with diligence to any pursuit for ever so short a time; on the contrary, when engaged in the confessional, he would spend ten or twelve, or even fifteen hours, incessantly listening to his penitents with invincible patience and unwearied attention, and in many cases being obliged to attend for hours together to long and most confused written accounts of general confessions of whole lives. Nor could he ever bear to withdraw himself from that meritorious employment, unless summoned by Father Segneri to go and take some refreshment, and then he left the confessional with a smiling and joyful countenance, as if he had been merely taking his repose, and doing nothing of consequence.

Admirable as was his perseverance, still more miraculous were the consummate prudence, and

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the indescribable affability and mildness with which he received all penitents, alluring them and embracing all with the tenderness of an affectionate parent. Every one who came to him he received with the same delight and kindness as if he had been the first or the only one to cast himself at his feet, and relieve his conscience of the insupportable weight of his sins. There was no poor creature buried in ignorance, or of the most uncouth manners, no peasant or needy labourer, no wretch immersed in vice, who did not see himself received with the utmost readiness, listened to with unwearied patience, and in the end relieved with the most unaffected tenderness. He cured the wounds and the sores of his penitents with sweetness, tempering, like the good Samaritan in the Gospel, the smart of the wine with the soothing properties of the oil. And so great was the benignity with which he treated those lost souls, that there was no one who did not go away ashamed of himself and enchanted with such amiable charity.

It is incredible how efficacious was this gentleness of Father Peter in attracting all classes of people to purify their consciences at his feet. Day and night there came an immense crowd of people, some to place themselves at the entrance to his room; others to occupy in the church the nearest position to his confessional, in order to set to rights the affairs of their souls. The good Father invariably afforded all who came full satisfaction, never feeling weary or exhausted, as, indeed, he was supported no less by his inflamed

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charity, than by the miraculous grace he had gained from heaven through the intercession of our glorious apostle S. Francis Xavier. He met with the greatest trouble from those penitents who presented themselves at his feet, not fully disposed to be reconciled with God; either unable to bring themselves to make peace with their enemies, or to restore the property or good name of which they had unjustly robbed their neighbours, or, in fine, to withdraw themselves resolutely from the proximate occasions of sin, as is indispensably necessary, that the antidote may not be transformed into poison, and the sacrament of penance made into an incentive to sacrileges. With such obstinate sinners, the industry of the father was indefatigable, and his patience in gaining them and setting them in a better course, was invincible; and he seldom failed to succeed by the manifest assistance of the Holy Spirit, which from time to time he invoked with his heart and his tongue, and which gave to his words a miraculous efficacy. To those who remained callous to his exhortations, persisting in their wicked ways, he resolutely denied absolution. Frequently this punishment was seen to be approved by heaven by manifest chastisements and still clearer signs of reprobation.

Such was the case with a young man, a native of Borgo Taro, a carpenter by trade, who being excessively addicted to drunkenness, showed himself in confession unwilling to correct this great vice. The father consequently dismissed him without granting him absolution. Meanwhile, the young man, instead of entering into himself and

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repenting, went about boasting that he had been absolved by another priest, and had even received the blessed Eucharist on occasion of the general communion. For this impiety he was very soon punished in a most exemplary manner; for the day had not yet passed when the sacrilegious young man received a dangerous wound from the cut of a sword. Every one was persuaded that the misfortune had happened to him in punishment of his crime; but the wretched man fell again into worse disorders than before, and was in a few months visited by Divine Justice with a more severe chastisement, being shot dead by a gun, without a moment of time to make his reconciliation with God.

The tender heart of Father Peter felt the most sensible affliction at this fatal accident. If any one attempted to console him by saying that before God he had fully satisfied his duty, by his constant endeavours to overcome the obstinacy of him who seemed determined to perish, he felt no manner of relief from these suggestions, nor could he regain his peace of mind, when he saw one whom he so much loved, lying dead before him: like a tender mother, who, after having exerted every care to effect the cure of her sick child, ceases not to lament, as she sees him stretched in death beneath her eyes, calling to mind the many fatigues she had in vain endured for him.

It is true that the number of his penitents whose hearts were not softened by his words, was extremely small; for his exhortations seem to have possessed such a wonderful efficacy in re-

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claiming sinners, and bringing them out of the unhappy state of crime, that he seemed to have been endued by God with that prodigious virtue, which was promised by the mouth of the Psalmist, "Dabit voci suæ vocem virtutis," which no heart can resist or oppose. Yet it is quite impossible to describe, how abundant was the harvest reaped by his industrious charity and patience, during the many years he was engaged in the holy work of the missions with Father Segneri, for the greatest part of the good therein effected remains concealed beneath the inviolable seal of confession. God alone, therefore, can know the number of those who were influenced by his strenuous and sweet behaviour to lay aside their evil doings, to retract calumnies and false reports, to break through unlawful connexions, to rectify marriages that were null, and to restore the ill-gotten property of others, often to a very large amount.

Innumerable were the general confessions of whole lives, made at the feet of this good father. We have heard of many, who, not being able to overcome the shame of manifesting some very heinous crime which they have committed, have undertaken long pilgrimages, some to Rome, and others to the holy house of Loretto, with a full determination that there they would relieve themselves of the poison that lay concealed in their hearts at the feet of some strange confessor; and yet after all these endeavours to unload their conscience, have returned home, more sacrilegious than ever. Some of these would not even make a sincere confession when at the point of death,

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and at the very verge of hell. For all these miserable creatures, the only efficacious remedy was to have recourse to the never-failing charity of Father Pinamonti, who, by his industrious and mild prudence, knew how to extract from their mouths the deadly poison which had remained so long buried within their souls.

It cannot indeed be denied that to these and many other good results, which I pass over, that I may not repeat what has been already treated in the life of Father Segneri, the first impulse was given by the apostolic preaching of Father Paul; yet it is no less true, that Father Peter co-operated with him in a most efficient manner. If, by the force of the preaching of Father Segneri, the first seeds of divine grace were sown in the hearts of his hearers, then did the zeal and charity of Father Pinamonti cultivate them by labours, and nourish them by incessant toils and industry, so that they took root, and brought forth an abundant harvest. Yet the abundance was not the only good property of the harvest, it was in addition, lasting and efficacious; so that when Father Peter, many years after, returned to hear confessions in districts where missions had been given, he met with numbers of persons, who, having been previously addicted to great crimes, had, during all that time, entirely refrained from them. Some souls were found exalted to a high degree of perfection. Among these there is recorded a poor sculptor, of the diocese of Brescia, a man of such innocence and purity of life, that having in after years confessed to one of the companions of

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Father Pinamonti, the father was not a little astonished with him; and having minutely questioned him by what means he had so well preserved the grace of God, he received this answer: "It is now thirty years since I had the great happiness to make a general confession to Father Pinamonti, when he was employed in the missions round about Brescia. In addition to the good advice he then left me, he gave me this little work of his, on "True Wisdom," which I esteem as an invaluable treasure, and from which I read some portion every day; and from that time until now the divine mercy has been pleased to preserve me from every mortal sin."

A whole volume of such interesting accounts might have been collected, had they not been partly lost, and partly kept secret by the humility of Father Peter. But his humility could not conceal the reputation and the universal esteem which the incomparable fruit of his labours in the confessional and in catechizing procured for him: he was celebrated by everybody as an eminent minister of the divine glory, and a principal instrument in procuring the salvation of souls. After he had completed a course of missions in the country about the Riviera di Genova, which were attended by the most extraordinary compunction on the part of the people, the supreme senate wished to give an account of them to the father-general in a letter expressive of their gratitude. It contained a special eulogium of the virtues and merits of Father Pinamonti, in these words: "Father Pinamonti has contributed greatly

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to this most holy work: he has exerted himself with the most indefatigable and exemplary labours, and in a style most particularly adapted to instruct the people, and inflame them with devotion and the love of God."

No one knew so well as Father Segneri how invaluable Father Pinamonti was by his charity and affability, and by his amiable and prudent manners. Hence he frequently declared that it was from his laborious toils and his sacred ministry that the greatest and most profitable fruits of the missions were derived. On all occasions, when discords and disputes of a more dangerous nature were brought before him, he used to refer the parties to Father Peter; declaring that he approved and ratified whatever should be settled by Father Pinamonti. Then the prudent father, with admirable readiness and skill, would effect good order, and bring everything to a happy conclusion, with the full satisfaction of all parties. Father Segneri dreaded nothing so much as the misfortune of losing such a valuable companion, who had been frequently destined by his superiors to higher appointments. On these occasions he never ceased to supplicate our Lord with continual prayers, and also to apply to the superiors, beseeching them not to take him away. When he was called to the missions of Genoa, he wrote thus to the father-general: "Without the assistance of Father Pinamonti in the missions in Genoa, I have no confidence in myself at all; because I know how much greater is the good he effects by his instructions, than I by my

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preaching. Besides this, there are his other gifts of prudence, affability, and charity, which render him beyond expression desirable in such a ministry. I am fully convinced, indeed, that in any position he will render special service to our Lord; but it appears to me that it will be difficult to render so much service elsewhere as in the missions."

CHAPTER VII.

THE UNION OF AFFECTIONS, AND THE RECIPROCAL ESTEEM WHICH EXISTED BETWEEN FATHER SEGNERI AND FATHER PINAMONTI.

As I have mentioned the great esteem in which Father Segneri held Father Pinamonti, it will not, I think, be out of place if I here say something about the mutual love and veneration which existed between these two servants of God. Friendship, as wise men assure us, cannot really exist except betwen virtuous persons, because in them alone are found true union of wills, and similarity of habits. Now a more perfect union of will, and similarity of habits, I think, could not be found than those which existed between Father Paul Segneri and Father Peter Pinamonti. Their two souls were so uniform, and their hearts united in such an inflamed zeal to advance the glory of God and the salvation of souls, that they would seem to have been formed purposely to be associated together in the im-

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portant work of the holy missions. There was never an undertaking proposed for the service of God which both did not embrace with the same generosity and eagerness; there were no labours to undergo in which they did not emulously strive to relieve one another; there was no deliberation on any subject in which their sentiments did not perfectly agree. A secular priest, who, for many years was their companion in the missions, states, that he does not recollect one single occasion when he heard the least word of contradiction or disagreement proceed from the lips of either, so fully did they unite in co-operating for the glory of God, that they seemed to possess but one heart and one soul, joined within two bodies, Cor unum et anima una. Hence sprung that mutual veneration and affectionate love, more tender than exists between brothers.

When the usual round of missions was finished, it was most edifying to see the love and humility with which they washed each other's feet; thereby representing a lively image of the apostolic Coenaculum. This union of their hearts was not confined to the time of the missions; it continued without the least abatement on their return, and during the whole time they spent in our colleges and houses of probation. They ever preserved the same union of heart and mind, of studies and labours, whether they dwelled together under the same roof, as happened for many years at Florence and at Rome, or separated, which came to pass when Father Peter was called to Modena

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to the service of her serene Highness the Duchess Lucrezia. After the first mission which they gave in 1665, in the diocese of Lucca, they remained for ever after bound together with such a strong bond of love, that Father Segneri having on one occasion to preach the Lent in Genoa, Father Pinamonti begged permission of the general to go with him as his companion; for they could not endure to live separate, on account of the reciprocal love, which in the beginning struck deep its roots, and during the whole of their lives continued to increase in their breasts.

Father Segneri was accustomed during the time that intervened between the missions to undertake some fresh labour by way of relaxation. Thus besides his preaching the Lents he composed those many precious volumes, which have passed frequently through the press, and been translated into various languages of Europe. But these compositions were not the labour of the mind, nor the fruit of the industry of Father Paul alone; Father Peter likewise contributed his share of labour and industry towards their completion. Both together they arranged the subject and settled the method; together they organized the different parts, and digested the matter, like the two eyes in one head, which in their operations seem but one. Father Pinamonti procured that this assistance which he rendered to Father Segneri in the composition of his works, should be concealed from the knowledge of the whole world; nor should we ever have become acquainted with it, had not Father

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Segneri, through modesty, proclaimed it both by word of mouth and the pen. Writing to the general in 1679, he expresses himself thus: "I could wish, if possible, before I die, to assist Father Pinamonti in a work of great use to all, containing one hundred practical discourses, which, when completed, will be, I am convinced, a most excellent work. Father Pinamonti is admirably skilled in these subjects; and to him, in a great measure, the world is indebted for those three little works, 'The Confessor,' 'The Penitent,' and the 'Devotee of the Blessed Virgin,' which we composed together. It was his express desire, however, that they should all appear under my name, for he thought that thereby a greater service would be rendered to God." Besides the hundred discourses of the "Christian Instructed," and the three books here mentioned, there is also another work, which was the fruit of the exertions of Father Pinamonti, entitled, "The Unbeliever without excuse," and the "Parish Priest Instructed," which were printed afterwards.

As Father Peter could not, on account of the infirmity of his head, apply himself in earnest to study, especially in the most flourishing period of his life, they divided the labour in this manner: Father Pinamonti collected and arranged materials for the works, getting some condescending companion to read to him such works as were needful. Whenever he came to anything which would answer his end, he took a note of it on a piece of paper, and afterwards procured it to be copied out. Thence Father Segneri, in his pecu-

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liarly elegant and impressive manner, beautifully amplified the materials, and put the last hand to the undertaking. By thus simply running through the different authors, Father Pinamonti acquired such a masterly knowledge of theological learning, that on all the most difficult and subtle points Father Segneri constantly had recourse to him for advice. And whenever he was consulted for his opinion on scholastic subjects by any of our fathers, I know that he used to make this answer: "You should go for the solution of this, as well as every other difficulty, to Father Peter, and you are sure to receive full satisfaction for whatever you want." One of the fathers of the noviciate at Rome, seeing that Father Pinamonti spent all the morning in consulting the scholastic writers to collect material for his learned work, on "The Unbeliever without excuse," one day said to him, "Father Peter, when will you have finished this your course of theology?" The father was making an humble apology, when the other, taking him up, replied, "True, you are right, but you need not now apply to it as a scholar, because you are able to teach it as a professor," and with a modest blush on his countenance, the humble father was silent, and departed.

So great was the esteem which Father Segneri had for Father Pinamonti, and so many the obligations which he acknowledged were owing to him for the assistance of his labours in the missions and in his studies, that he frequently declared, that it would be a less severe stroke to lose his friends and relations, and everything in

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this world, than to be deprived of Father Pinamonti; for he thought there was more good in him alone than in all the rest. Father Peter was once dangerously ill at Florence, and a person who was present assures us, that during the whole time that the danger lasted, which was several days, Father Segneri did nothing else than weep most bitterly, saying every now and then to himself, "Where shall I find another Pinamonti? Where shall I find another companion in the missions so indefatigable? Where a friend so holy and virtuous, that for the many years we have been together, I have neither seen nor heard him do or say anything which had a resemblance to a venial sin?" When Father Pinamonti was detained at Modena to be confessor to the duchess, Father Segneri immediately wrote to the general from Florence, beseeching him, that in case either of them should be attacked by any dangerous sickness, the other might be permitted to repair immediately to visit his sick brother; for they were so intimately united in affections, that they could not reconcile themselves, as it were, to be separated even in death.

Nor were the love and veneration entertained by Father Pinamonti towards Father Segneri one jot less than those we have described as the feelings of the latter. Father Pinamonti revered Father Segneri as an oracle to direct his actions and manner of living; without his advice and direction he never dared to undertake anything, either in the affairs of the missions, or in the way of composition. In every occurrence

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his constant study was to conform to the wishes of Father Paul. Whatever was pleasing to him, that alone did he desire; his greatest delight was to unite with his wishes, and he seemed transformed into him, even more by nature than virtues. To see the love with which he served him, not merely in the missions, but in every place and at all times, was a subject of the greatest astonishment. Not content with aiding him in the composition of his many writings, it was his greatest desire to serve him as a simple minister in his room, in the house and without, with greater assiduity than any page, and with greater affection than any brother. Hence one of our society seeing Father Peter altogether occupied in serving Father Paul, said to him more than once, "It is not becoming that you who are the theologian and the assistant of Father Paul in his studies, should be occupied the whole of the day in attending him as his menial servant." But the more he kept concealed the assistance which he rendered him in his compositions, the more did he glory in being considered in all other things the servant of Father Segneri.

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CHAPTER VIII.

HE OBTAINS PERMISSION TO CONTINUE THE MISSIONS AFTER THEY WERE GIVEN UP BY FATHER SEGNERI.

The union between Father Segneri and Father Pinamonti, in the midst of the apostolic labours of the missions, continued for the space of twenty-six successive years, and would have lasted much longer, with abundant consolation to both, had not his Holiness Pope Innocent XII. called Father Segneri to fresh duties, which withdrew him altogether from this holy ministry. In the beginning of the Lent of 1692, he was accordingly called from Florence to occupy the position of preacher to the pontifical palace, which duty he fulfilled with the highest applause of the whole court. This new appointment was most afflicting to Father Paul, but, if possible, still more so to Father Peter. Father Segneri grieved most bitterly, esteeming it a great misfortune to be thus compelled to abandon the missions. The affliction of Father Pinamonti was doubly great, for he wept on account of the grief it gave his friend, as well as his own misfortune, in not being able to continue any longer the missions in company with Father Segneri. Many, both seculars and religious, of our society came, full of joy, to congratulate him on this most honourable duty bestowed upon his dear friend Father Segneri. But he, in the midst of the common rejoicing,

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was unable to conceal his grief; and whilst in the company of his most confidential friends, he did nothing but exclaim with continual sighs, "Alas! the poor missions! when shall I find a companion like to Father Paul."

His esteem for the holy missions was so great, that he was unable to conceive any ministry which tended more to the glory of God; and hence he dreaded nothing so much as the idea of being compelled to abandon them. Whilst Father Segneri was occupied at Florence, in preparing for the press that work entitled, "The Christian Instructed," the thought entered his mind, that it might perhaps tend to the service of God, if he abandoned the missions for a time, and confined his attention to his works, which were at that time actually in progress. Before, however, coming to any determination, he was anxious to acquaint Father Pinamonti, who was then at Rome, with his idea, and obtain his advice on the subject. No sooner was the project mentioned to him, than he opposed it; and though in everything else he submitted blindly to the suggestions of Father Paul, on this occasion on the contrary, he ceased not to offer the most determined resistance, pointing out to him in a most forcible manner, how much every other advantage fell short of the good that was gained in the missions; and at the same time recalled to his mind the vow he had made to spend all the days of his life in these holy exercises. This his most ardent desire never to abandon the missions for anything in the whole world, made him extremely carefulto avoid every-

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thing which might have a tendency to detain him from going into the country, to exercise his holy ministry free from all impediment. When he was in Rome particularly, he never wished to confer with any of the cardinals or persons of note, in order to avoid all possible danger. He was one day summoned to attend a cardinal in the Noviciate at Rome, whose confessor was not at hand. Father Pinamonti seemed unwilling to comply with this summons, and began to make excuses, to the great astonishment of all, who knew his readiness to attend to works of charity and the service of his neighbour. Receiving, however, a positive command from his superior, that he should obey, and go to assist the cardinal, he went without further delay; and when he had heard his confession, he immediately hastened to his superior, covered with confusion and shame, to excuse himself for the repugnance he had shown; confessing with all sincerity that the reason why he abstained from conversing with, and hearing the confessions of their eminences the cardinals, was, that he might meet no obstacle in the work of the missions.

A great obstacle was presented, by his meeting with Madame Lucrezia of Modena. On the death of her late confessor, who was of our society, this princess immediately cast her eyes upon, and chose Father Pinamonti to supply his place, and though there were many others well qualified for that situation in the college at Modena, yet he was preferred to them all, on account of the high reputation for virtue and prudence which he had

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gained whilst giving a series of missions with Father Segneri in that diocese. The satisfaction and joy of the princess, at having made so happy a selection, was only equalled by the regret of Father Peter himself, who entertained the greatest dislike to courts, and felt still more the loss of his favourite missions.

A long struggle and contention now occurred between the two; the duchess repeatedly renewing her earnest entreaties to have him for her director, and the father declaring that he was incompetent to serve her purpose, and protesting that on no consideration whatever could he abandon the work of the missions. At length, after much opposition on both sides, Father Pinamonti thought it most advisable to yield in part and submit, through fear of a direct command from Rome. The agreement then was, that he should act in capacity of her confessor, during those months only that he was not occupied with Father Segneri in giving missions.

Now those who have seen how entirely Father Peter devoted heart and soul to the missions, may easily conceive the sentiments of regret which he experienced on seeing himself abandoned by Father Segneri, and in danger of being himself appointed to some more eminent employment by his superiors, according to the wishes of many, and especially of the princess, who was at that time in Rome. There were not wanting some of his most intimate friends, who endeavoured to console him, saying that he might be content with twenty-six years which he had already spent

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in the missions, and that as he was now advanced in years, he might contribute more efficiently to the glory of God, by applying himself earnestly to the instruction of our young students in rhetoric, in the capacity of spiritual father, as he had done before, in the most satisfactory manner, for many months. They assured him that thus he would the better conform himself to the example of Christ, who, coming into the world to sanctify the world, spent the greatest portion of His time in instructing His disciples, and in fitting them for the apostolic ministry. But these kind suggestions afforded no manner of consolation to Father Peter, and heaving a deep sigh, he exclaimed, "Oh! if you knew the great advantages that accrue from the missions, you would not speak thus."

Whilst distracted by these thoughts and apprehensions, his only resource and consolation were to throw himself at the foot of his crucified Lord, beseeching Him to render him worthy to continue even till death in these holy exercises. So fervent were his supplications, and so incessant the tears he shed in presence of his Lord, that in the end he was heard, and finished his life in the very midst of these sacred duties, like a brave warrior on the field of battle in the arms of victory.

Having thus obtained the desired permission to return to his missions with fresh companions, the joy of his countenance, which had lately given place to sorrow, began again to beam forth, and he ran immediately to bear the news to his

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friends, and communicate to them his consolation. Not content with prosecuting the missions to his last breath, he procured that they should be perpetuated after his death. Her serene highness the duchess, on account of the veneration in which she held Father Peter, and her pious desire to co-operate in some manner in the salvation of souls, gave him for the service of the missions her nuptial ring. And Father Pinamonti, from the value of this, established a perpetual fund in behalf of those labourers who continued the missions, according to the plan established by Father Segneri; thereby providing them not only with books and articles of devotion, which were distributed among the people, but also with funds for their own support: for he knew from experience how much more fruitful and acceptable are those missions which do not in any manner interfere with the purse of the curates or the people.

CHAPTER IX.

HE RESUMES THE MISSIONS WITH FRESH COMPANIONS.

It was the opinion of many that the missions of Father Pinamonti without Father Segneri, would be like a body without a soul. But they soon discovered, that though devoid of the assistance of this Father, they were yet not without a truly apostolic spirit. As soon as it was publicly known

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that Father Peter had again set out to preach the missions, he was immediately requested by many prelates in the most pressing terms to come and sanctify their dioceses, for his talents and virtues were well known to all. He commenced in 1692, and continued to the year 1703, in which he died. In 1692 and 93, he sanctified the dioceses of Urbino, S. Angelo, Montefeltro, and portions of Forli, Ancona, Sinigaglia, Recanati and Osimo. He was detained in Rome during the year 94 by a grievous sickness, which brought him to the last extremity. From 95 to the holy year he was employed in giving missions in the cities of Arrezzo and Cortona, and the dioceses attached, and in parts of those of Spoleto, Monte Cassano, Modena, Carfagnana, and Bologna. During the holy year, in order to gain the advantage of the Jubilee, and still not leave the missions, he occupied himself in sanctifying the villages in the neighbourhood of Rome, and then returned immediately to the diocese of Bologna. He exerted his labours in 1701 and 1702 about Como, Valtellina, and Val Chiavenna. In 1703, which was the last of his life, after having preached the missions in Livorno, and the neighbouring parts, he repaired to the diocese of Novara, where he happily terminated his days in the district of Orta.

In all these missions he left the office of preaching to the father who accompanied him, and pursued his accustomed ministry of catechizing and hearing confessions; without making the least change in the order pursued with Father Segneri,

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but undergoing fresh and greater labours, and spreading around still more brilliant rays of the most eminent virtues.

He invariably observed his former custom, of walking always with naked feet. On arriving near to the place where the missions were to commence, he bared his feet, and from that time never wore either shoes or stockings the whole time the missions lasted, which was generally little less than six months in the year. He observed this practice with such exactness and love, that when he was about to celebrate the holy mass, he used to carry his slippers under his arm from the house to the sacristy, and back from the sacristy to the house, that he might not use them except at the very time of the divine sacrifice. He would most willingly have gone barefooted the whole of the year, even when not employed on the missions, from the example of S. Francis Xavier; but as he was an enemy to all exterior austerities, which might bear the character of singularity, he made this invention, to wear shoes interwoven with horse-hair, and thus satisfy in part his desire for mortification.

His companions never ceased to admonish him in their journeys to have regard to his age, and his weak constitution. But he immediately gave them the following answer: "I wish to preserve as long as ever God grants me life the method which I began with Father Segneri."

When one of his companions would ask him if he felt exhausted with the journey, he used to answer, "I beg of you not to ask me that question,

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because I never feel weariness during the missions." And truly it was a sight most edifying to behold the aged father journeying from spring to autumn with naked feet, always in advance with his fellows, his countenance beaming with joy and delight, and never showing the least sign of dejection or weariness. It was remarked by many that in going from place to place, instead of choosing the most agreeable and well trodden path, he frequently went out of the regular road, and walked where the thorns and briars were so thick as to draw blood from his feet, and tear his flesh. He hid this by no means slight mortification under the pretence of searching for simple and medicinal herbs, in which he had great experience, and took much delight. A secular priest, who for many years accompanied him in the missions, relates, that after the mission of Pontremoli, they returned together to Modena, and that in crossing the Apennines, such a violent storm of wind and rain arose, that the poor old man was frequently thrown off his balance, and fell into ditches filled with water and mud. Raising himself all drenched and besmeared with the mud, he would continue his journey without being at all disconcerted, and with his countenance even more serene and tranquil than ever. His companion could not bear to see the saintly old man thus exposed to the violence of the elements, and suffering from the difficulty of the paths: and meeting with a number of asses, he begged the owner of them, for charity, to allow the father mount one. The man willingly consented, but he, who in all his journeys

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sought for sufferings, kindly thanked the man for his offer, but preferred, in the wet and dirty state to which he was reduced, to continue his journey on foot. I should be carried into a tedious prolixity if I were here to relate, one by one, all the voluntary sufferings, which, of his own free will, he added to the inconveniences presented by the journey itself. It will be better, therefore, if I explain in short the order and the division of the day he used to observe in his journeys.

At the first setting out, he intoned the Itinerarium, after which, recollected and in silence, he passed a considerable length of time in nourishing his mind with holy meditations. The modesty and composure which beamed in his countenance whilst occupied in this holy exercise, were such, that they moved his companions likewise to devotion. He next paid to God the ordinary tribute of the canonical hours, and all the rest of the day was spent in conferences and spiritual conversation; for, indeed, from a heart so full of God, nothing could proceed but words and sentiments purely divine. He would frequently cite examples from the Mother of God, and the lives of the saints, with so much unction, that he inspired fervour into the hearts of his companions, and considerably lightened the fatigue of the journey. Such was the sweetness with which he conducted these holy discourses, that numbers as they passed, happening to hear him, were unable to withdraw themselves from him. Wherefore, leaving in part their domestic affairs, they continued to follow eager to partake of a conversation so angelical.

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There is no instance recorded of his being desirous, when passing through the principal cities of Italy, to see the curiosities of the place, either villas or gardens, galleries of paintings, or palaces, which afford such delight to others. On the contrary, he showed himself as regardless of these earthly glories, as he was enamoured with those of heaven. But he went most willingly to those sanctuaries where miraculous crucifixes and devotional images were held in veneration, to refresh his mind, and recommend to God the good result of his missions. When he was invited by persons of eminence to see some remarkable object in their galleries or gardens, he never slighted the invitation, through respect for the person of the individual, but went to the spot without evincing any annoyance: whilst, however, he remained there, present in body, he availed himself of those spectacles, to raise his heart to heaven, and unite his soul with God. To a companion who showed great curiosity to go and see that famous painting by Correggio, of the Nativity, called the "Notte," which is preserved in the gallery of his serene highness the duke of Modena, he made this remark: "This is an excellent opportunity presented to you, Father, to offer to the most holy Virgin an act of mortification. And, indeed, what more delightful sight can a missioner desire, than to behold souls redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ, raised from the oppressive slavery of Satan, to the true dignity of sons of God." By these edifying remarks, and still more by the example of his holy life, did Father Peter study to inspire into his companions a truly apostolic spirit.

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The less his willingless to turn out of the way, or delay his journeys to indulge his curiosity, the greater was his eagerness to snatch at every opportunity therein afforded him for the exercise of charity. There was no sick man so wretched and poor, but when he was summoned to hear his confession or administer to him consolation, he did not immediately hasten, borne on the wings of the most fervent charity. Nor was it necessary even to call him to contribute to the service of his neighbour. It was quite enough that he should see even at a distance some poor creature in need of assistance, to make him hasten with the tenderness of an inexpressible love to succour him. Whilst they were employed on the missions at Comano, one of the principal towns of Lunigiana, Father Pinamonti learned that at Fiviazano, which is situated five miles from Comano, there were a number of unfortunate prisoners, who could not in any manner partake of the advantages of the mission. It was the very hottest time of the year, the roads were covered with sharp projecting stones, and he had, moreover, to cross a steep mountain; notwithstanding all this, when the father had given the last benediction upon dinner, he set out to confess these unhappy creatures, and returned the same evening to Comano. His companion writes, that he was not a little edified by this fervent act of zeal, to see the aged father, quite spent with the labours of the general communion, which had taken up the whole morning, set out at an

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hour when the heat is most oppressive, and journey on with naked feet among those sharp stones, with such haste, that they were much swollen and cut, so as to be covered with blood. Such were the relaxations he made use of to recreate his mind.

CHAPTER X.

THE METHOD OBSERVED BY FATHER PINAMONTI IN THE MISSIONS.

The first care of Father Peter on setting out into the country to give a course of missions, was to abandon himself entirely into the hands of God, who could furnish his soul with virtues suitable for an undertaking so glorious and noble as that of labouring for the salvation of souls. Hence he used constantly to recommend to the Lord the good result of the missions, with many fervent prayers and extraordinary mortifications, offering up the holy sacrifice of the mass, and getting many others to offer it up for the same intention. By this magnanimous confidence in God, and humble diffidence in himself, he spent his labours most happily in the missions, to the great glory of God, and the abundant profit of his neighbour.

The method he adopted was precisely the same as he and Father Segneri had before followed. No sooner had he arrived at the appointed place,

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than he immediately took upon himself the task of arranging everything that was necessary for the sacred functions, allowing himself no rest whatever, as if he had been the youngest and strongest of the party, and had felt no weariness or other sufferings on the road thither. For his abode he generally chose some place the most densely populated, and the most convenient for the meeting of the neighbouring people, in order that all might enjoy the sacred offices, and their numbers being greater, their fervour likewise might increase. On his approach to the place he was met by a great concourse of people, and being conducted to the most spacious church, he there delivered the first discourse. Next morning they went in procession to one of the neighbouring villages, and, gathering together the inhabitants by the sound of a bell, invited them to participate in the good of the mission. After dinner numerous processions advanced from the different places round about, to be present at the instructions and the exercises of penance, which holy employment occupied the rest of the day, and sometimes until a late hour in the evening. I should not omit to mention here what happened at Furba. Whilst the mission was going on at Bormio, one of the principal places of the Valtellina, a procession was one day formed to visit the church at Furba, and invite the people to the exercises. But as the signal from the bell was not given in proper time, the people, dispersed among the fields, were not ready to receive the procession from Bormio;

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and the proceedings were not conducted with that order which could be desired. The people of Furba were so ashamed of this accident, that, to repair their error, they all came in procession after the hour of dinner in the garb of penitents, the women wearing crowns of thorns upon their heads, and the men walking with naked feet, inflicting discipline on themselves for a distance of two miles. And thus did they atone for the previous disorder, and redouble their fervour.

To listen to the instructions the people assembled in the open air, as the churches were none of them sufficiently large to contain so great a multitude; and when they were all seated in good order, the men separate from the women, Father Pinamonti mounted a small platform and delivered his catechetical lecture. With what talent and learning, with what facility and clearness he performed this holy duty, we have already stated. I would merely remark here, that, if in the commencement of his career, the attendance upon these instructions was very numerous, it must certainly have exceeded all calculation in the last years of his life, on account of the high veneration in which his angelic virtues were held, when they saw as well as heard that he was a perfect master of sanctity; his whole life being a most impressive lesson, which instructed and moved their hearts more than any words could possibly do.

As the esteem for his virtues increased, so did the number of his penitents, eager to settle the affairs of their troubled consciences with God

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at his feet; and every one was welcomed and received with the utmost readiness and love, as if he had come to the father with a recommendation from heaven itself. He availed himself of three means, or, to speak more correctly, he brought into practice three virtues all at the same time, in order to bring the guilty to a true change of life, viz., benignity, discretion, and patience. With these three virtues he found access to every heart, softening the most obdurate, and inflaming the most tepid.

No criminal ever found himself so buried in iniquity, that, when he approached the confessional, the good father did not receive him with an angelic sweetness of countenance, and press him to his heart as if he had been the prodigal son; thereby showing a perfect resemblance to that father in the Gospel, who, in recovering his lost child, took no notice of his coming all sordid and unclean, but considered merely that he was his own son. He compassionated the miseries of others as though they had been his own. And God knows that he would never show the least sign of disgust or indignation at the innumerable hideous enormities which so frequently resounded in his ear.

He made no distinction whatever between nobles and common people, learned and ignorant; seeing in the soul of each the image of God impressed, and therein deposited the infinite treasures of the merits of Christ. However, he preferred to confess men rather than women; because, he used to say, that in hearing the

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confessions of women, the loss of time was greater than the advantage gained, whereas, in hearing those of men, there was greater profit reaped in a shorter space of time. On this account he generally had the confessional in the sacristies and more retired places.

In the act of hearing confessions, he was gifted with a truly wonderful dexterity in discovering the whole interior of his penitents, and made an analysis, so to speak, of the nature, disposition, and passion of each, so as to apply the means best adapted to move them to true repentance, and the remedies most efficacious to guard them from all danger for the future. But though the sweetness with which he treated those lost souls was exceeding great, yet still more admirable was the force which he gave to his words, so as to enlighten their minds, and at the same time to enkindle fervour in their hearts; acting like the sun, which unites heat with light. The hatred, which, from a long course of continual meditation, he had conceived for the malice of sin, constantly furnished him with new arguments and powerful motives to make his penitents see the true enormity of the guilt of their crimes. And every word which he uttered, proceeding rather from his heart than his lips, was an arrow that pierced even the most hardened hearts, and frequently drew from them tears of compunction in such abundance, that many, seized with a horror of themselves and their past lives, exclaimed in words, choked with bitter sighs, "Do you think, father, that God will pardon me such

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monstrous crimes, and that I can be saved?" Hence he had frequently to exert the utmost extent of his charity, to encourage and support them with hopes in the Divine mercy.

With such as joined a greater obstinacy with a higher degree of ignorance, and whom it was necessary to instruct at great length, the patience of the good father was invincible. And when any of these could not be affected by explaining to them the miserable condition of their souls, and the danger of being eternally lost, he would invite them into a retired place, and there display before their eyes paintings, representing in a most lively manner the pains of the damned; and by means of this double attack, directed at the same time against their eyes and ears, he succeeded in gaining noble victories and noble triumphs, which filled the whole heavenly court with joy. He showed no less patience in overcoming the obstinacy of many respectable and learned persons, who, having been for a length of years habituated to vice, could not prevail upon themselves to break through their criminal attachment, and abandon their wretched lives. To conquer their obduracy, and dispose them to a true change of manners, there was no weight of reasoning, no industry he did not constantly bring into action with indefatigable constancy. His ordinary weapons on such occasions were fervent prayer and severe disciplines, mingling his tears with his blood, prostrate at the feet of his crucified Lord, to effect the conversion of these obdurate souls. When his first assaults proved unavailing, he

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returned to the contest with a full resolution to prevail, redoubling his supplications to Jesus, and discovering fresh means and additional resources to accomplish his purpose: for this expert captain had ever ready at hand a constant supply of fresh arms and weapons, to render himself victorious over his enemies.

In 1691, Fathers Segneri and Pinamonti were preaching the missions in Lunigiana. The latter having heard the confession of one of the principal gentlemen of that part, seriously exhorted him to settle the affair of his eternal salvation, proposing to him such measures as he thought most conducive to maintain him in the grace of God; but the gentleman, through motives of interest, neglected to comply with the advice. Seven years after this time Father Pinamonti returned with another companion to renew the missions there, and he remarked that this gentleman avoided coming to confession to him. Whilst the father was seated in his confessional, he chanced to catch a distant glance of him, and immediately rising from his seat, he ran to embrace him, with a cordiality that was visible in his countenance, and addressed him thus: "Signor, are you coming this time to make your confession to me? behold me ready to serve you!" Pressed in this obliging manner, the gentleman could not decline the invitation, and accordingly he presented himself the following day, but with the intention of concealing some of his evil habits, of which he had a few days before accused himself to another priest. When he had finished his confession,

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Father Peter immediately discovered what was passing in the interior of his penitent, either from a clear recollection which he retained of his former confession, or from some particular light, imparted to him, at the moment, from on high; and without absolving him, gave him a gentle admonition to go and examine his conscience anew, and then return to the confessional. The gentleman, returning again to the feet of the father, felt himself urged by an interior violence to open to him his whole heart, and to give him a faithful account of those particular faults which he had before concealed. He was listened to with tenderness, and advised by the father to settle himself in the marriage state. But as the penitent refused to follow this advice, through motives of economy, which advised him to the contrary, the good father asked permission to speak to him on the subject out of confession. Time after time did he treat with him on the matter with great zeal, confuting in the strongest manner his objections, and animating him to a confidence in God and in His holy providence, which would not fail to make ample amends for the losses he fancied would accrue to his family, in a manner more satisfactory than he could possibly imagine. Still the gentleman remained firm in his opposition, and callous to the exhortations of Father Peter, or, to speak more correctly, to the will of God, which spoke by the mouth of the father, giving therein a sad proof of the fact, that in the false balance of men, human and earthly motives too often prevail over those that are heavenly and

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divine. However, the father was not to be discouraged by all this, nor did he abandon his design, but returned to the attack with such a degree of warmth and determination, that, as the gentleman himself declared, his zeal had now become quite importunate, and he at length came to a final resolution to cut off all communication, and abandon the subject. But even this did not suffice to withdraw the father from his undertaking, and when the mission had closed, he stationed himself at the descent from a certain mountain, where he knew the gentleman had to pass, and falling in with him, he ceased not during the whole journey to exhort him to make up his mind, and trust in God, adding, that for his own part, he would not fail to pray to God that His most holy will might be done. And as soon as ever the father arrived at Modena, he addressed to him these words: "It is well indeed to have a due regard for temporal affairs, but how much more important is it to look to such as are eternal! Of what advantage is fine beautiful hair to him who has no head? Quid prodest hominis si mundum universum lucretur, animæ vero suæ detrimentum patiatur." These repeated assaults the gentleman could no longer resist, and laying aside all motives of economy and human interest, he acknowledged himself vanquished. He adopted the advice of the father, as though it had been given him by the mouth of an angel, blessing God every day, for having, through the means of Father Pinamonti, withdrawn him from many dangers, and established him in the sure

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way of eternal salvation. I have thought proper to mention this fact in detail, not so much on account of the importance I attach to it in itself, but because it serves to show us clearly with what benignity and unwearied patience Father Peter laboured to procure the gaining of souls to God.

To his incessant labours in the confessional and in catechizing, he added the arduous toils attendant on processions and exercises of penance, which he never omitted, not even in his most advanced age. In the more populous districts the processions were made in the evening; and in every mission that was given, there was one conducted in a more solemn manner than the rest, on the last day of the general communion. Every time that these processions occurred, Father Pinamonti was sure to be present, disciplining himself in the habit of a penitent, even to blood. And he was accustomed on these occasions to carry the banner in one hand, and apply the discipline with the other, or else tear his flesh and inflict deep wounds with a cruel instrument made of cork, and armed with iron points. This instrument was, after his death, presented to the grand duke, who esteemed it an invaluable treasure.

As Father Pinamonti was incessantly employed in the confessional, he used to commission one of his companions to give him notice when the time arrived for commencing the procession. This person, however, taking compassion on his great age and fatigues, more than once neglected to

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inform him. The good old man, whose greatest desire was never to absent himself from any of these devout exercises, perceiving the mistake, ran in haste to put on his capuche, and followed after the procession, which was already commenced, all the while disciplining himself most severely. Then, when the ceremony was brought to a close, he said to his companion, "God forgive you, for thus wishing to deprive me of this blessing, and all the rest of the good example." And in truth, the good example of Father Peter was a wonderful stimulus to excite in the people an extraordinary compunction. For seeing a man whose life was innocence itself, enduring so many labours, and shedding so much blood, every one remained filled with deep compunction, saying within himself, "How shall I ever be able fully to atone for my sins and save my soul, if so many penitential exercises are performed to find the way to heaven, by one who leads so holy a life? What will become of me, who, though loaded with guilt, impose no sufferings upon myself, and, living in a sinful course, fly from penance as much as possible!" It can scarcely be conceived how much these reflections tended to move the hardest to shed tears of bitter repentance, and to grieve in real earnest for their crimes.

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CHAPTER XI.

THE FRUIT OF THE MISSIONS OF FATHER PINAMONTI.

It is not my intention to arrange a catalogue of the fruits which Father Pinamonti drew from his labours, during twelve years in the missions, as the greatest part of the good effected in behalf of his neighbour has not come to our knowledge: and to relate one by one the most remarkable of the conversions of which we do possess an account, would be too much a repetition of the same facts. I shall confine myself, therefore, to giving a brief account of what happened in the mission of the Valtellina, and the country of Chiavenna in 1792, which was almost the last of his life; because we have a faithful relation of this, compiled by one who was himself present. And from this it will be easy to infer how much good was effected in all his other missions.

In the first place, so numerous was the concourse attracted by the sweet odour of his virtues, that the like was never seen, even in the time of Father Segneri. And the more value may be set upon this great multitude of attendants, from the fact that the country round about Valtellina is for the most part surrounded by lofty mountains. Hence, to reach the place of the father's residence, and attend at the exercises, it was necessary for the people to come twelve, fifteen, and even thirty miles, through a most fatiguing country, besides

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the expense of procuring boats to cross the lake, and the inconvenience of remaining all night away from their homes; for many could not possibly go and return home in a day, not even during the longest of the summer months. On no occasion was there such an attendance of people, and collected as they were from such distant parts: many even came from different dioceses, as those of Bergamo, Brescia, the valley of Grigioni, and from Trent; all enticed by the fame of Father Pinamonti, which had penetrated those distant parts.

The processions which were formed in the districts about the lake, presented a particularly pleasing spectacle; as in visiting the churches, they sailed along the lake in procession in this form. In front sailed a bark, with the crucifix raised on high, and filled with little boys. Behind this came another bark, in which were the priests and the rest of the clergy; they were escorted by other boats on the right and left, those on the right being occupied by the women, and those on the left by the men, altogether making up a fleet of twenty-five or thirty vessels. The clergy intoned the Litanies or some Psalm, and were answered in two choirs, first by the men, and then the women; and these melodious strains, which resounded with so much devotion over the whole lake, joined with the style of sailing, never before witnessed, not only served to gratify their curiosity, but moved the people to tears of tender piety, and completely took possession of their hearts.

The fervour and punctuality with which the vast concourse of people attended at all the sacred

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functions of preaching, instruction, and penance, are indescribable. Some idea may be gathered from the following fact, which happened in Ponte. A certain tradesman wanted a number of men to perform a piece of work which could not be deferred; yet among such a multitude, there could not be found a single one, who was willing to labour during those days, and to lose the benefit of the spiritual exercises, for pay. At the penitential processions in the evening, the crowd was so great that all the churches of the Valtellina, though large and spacious, were found to be too small to contain those who came to take the discipline, and nowhere in all the missions had so many been known to inflict this penance upon themselves, or to evince greater fervour during the infliction.

Yet these exterior signs of penance are but the least part of the fruits reaped by the apostolic zeal of Father Pinamonti in those parts. By far a more estimable result, was the reforming many abuses and scandals, and the introduction of exercises of Christian piety. So numerous and extensive were the restorations of ill-gotten property; so many the sacrilegious confessions now repaired, and the wicked customs abolished; so many females of bad character publicly asked pardon for the scandals they had given, and, in fine, so many souls that had passed years upon years without ever thinking of confessing their sins, were now fully reconciled to God, that the Capuchin and the Franciscan fathers, who had, with untiring zeal, assisted at the missions, ceased not at every moment to exclaim, "Oh! what good has here

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been effected! how inestimable are the fruits of this mission!"

Gambling, the ruin of families, and the school of iniquity, on account of the frauds there practised, and the horrible blasphemies with which the holy name of God is repeatedly profaned, was entirely eradicated from that country: the gamesters threw away all their cards, and promised never more to take to them again; and those who dealt in those articles committed to the flames all the packs which they had for sale. One of these sent a man loaded with as many packs of cards as he could carry to Father Pinamonti, that he might, with his own hands, make of them an agreeable sacrifice to God. As the father was passing through this country some time after, he was solemnly assured by many, that not a single pack of cards could be found in the whole neighbourhood. There was a dance practised there, of so improper a nature, that if immodesty and scandal had agreed to join together in a dance, they could not have found one more suitable to their characters. Moreover, this wicked custom was so universal, that it was adopted on every occasion of recreation, even out of the time of the Carnival; and so addicted were the people to it, that at the time of gathering the harvest of millet and panic, which are grown in great quantities in those parts, the method of thrashing the grain was to dance upon it in this manner. For the total extirpation of this abuse, a vow was made before a devotional image of the ever-blessed Virgin, never to permit or to join for the future in this species

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of dance, and all bound themselves solemnly before the altar; first, all the gentlemen, next, the musicians, and those who had the conducting of the dance, and then fathers and mothers, with whole families; and, finally, all in one body confirmed their good resolution, raising their hands as a sign of their taking this vow in honour of the Mother of God, who, we may easily suppose, rejoiced at this step, since thereby the bait to so many improprieties which are hateful in her sight was taken away.

The vices which spring from hatred are generally the most difficult to overcome, since this passion is more violent than any other in the heart of man. Undoubtedly Father Pinamonti received a special grace from heaven to root out entirely these disorders from the whole country of Valtellina and Chiavenna, where these missions were given, there being no enmity arising from quarrels or murders which was not brought by him to a happy issue. He also banished a universal abuse among the young men, that of carrying at their sides short pistols and other prohibited arms, by exhorting them to lay them aside in honour of the most holy Virgin. And thus in a short time he obtained a great quantity of these weapons to suspend about the altars of the Madonna. Among those who made offerings of their arms to the blessed Virgin, one instance is worthy of being mentioned, that of a father, who, with heroic generosity, presented the pistol with which his own son had been shot the year before, and which he had preserved, to keep

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alive on his mind the determination of vengeance. Not content with this offering, he gave a certain sum of money to a priest to say a number of masses for the good of the murderer.

The good father experienced greater difficulty in reconciling those discords which arose from motives of interest, and were carried so far that they treated one another as declared enemies, without ever interchanging a word. In order to the more speedy adjustment of these enmities, he had recourse to compromises, prevailing on the parties first to confer with one another on their differences, and then submit the whole case to the decision of judges. And it is incredible how many hatreds and disputes were amicably settled, which too often prove the ruin of families, and foment the most deadly strifes. A singular example of this is given in the case of two priests who were brothers, and had been disputing for thirty years with such rancour, that even in choir, when singing the divine office, they turned their backs upon one another. Many prelates of the highest eminence had exerted all their endeavours to correct this scandal, so open to the eyes of the public, and so disreputable to the sacerdotal character. But their efforts were all in vain; God had reserved the glory and merit of this reconciliation to the charity of Father Peter, who, by his sweet and efficacious manners, prevailed upon the two litigants to come to a compromise, and live together like good brothers and true ecclesiastics. The union happily effected between the two principal personages of those

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parts is perhaps more remarkable and important. They, by their nobility and learning, joined with the influence they had respectively had in their own neighbourhood, held for the space of eighteen years the whole country divided into two factions, to the great detriment of families, of religion, and of ecclesiastical immunities. Yet when the good father was labouring there for the salvation of souls, these two, the authors of so many scandals, were so powerfully touched by divine grace, that they instantly entered into a mutual pacification, and showed signs of such sincere charity, that all recognized in their conversion the work of the omnipotent hand of God.

As there were in the Valtellina and Chiavenna many of a different religion, Father Peter had there an opportunity of doing much good among the heretics, many of whom daily attended the mission, in despite of their ministers, who ceased not to chastise them with severe reproofs. Many of these heretics had already abjured their errors; others yet remained in a wavering state, and a still greater number would have been undoubtedly gained to God, if the father had been able to remain longer to instruct them. One among these converts had embraced the Catholic Faith with such generosity, that, whilst a number of gentlemen were exerting themselves to procure some assistance for him, he cried out in a loud voice, "Do not trouble yourselves, Signori, in obtaining support for me; I became a Catholic purely to save my soul."

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I should never have finished, if I were to relate all the good wrought in the Valtellina by Father Pinamonti, in 1702. It is certain that many of the curates remarked that the Valtellina had undergone a thorough revolution under Father Peter, a sensible and universal change being observed; in the priests, by a more becoming style of dress and behaviour; in the ladies, who had begun to appear more modestly covered; in the youths, by withdrawing themselves with greater caution from dangerous conversation; and in all by a total reform in their habits, a more diligent frequenting of the sacraments, and a more constant use of devout exercises.

A mountebank discovered this change to his cost, who was accustomed to pay regular visits to the Valtellina to extract from the people by his knavery large sums of money. Appearing in Sondrio after the mission, he found that not one person would go to hear him, and the consequence was, that instead of carrying off his accustomed gains, he was obliged to leave a portion of his wearing apparel there in pawn. He then passed to Tirano, hoping he should be able to recover his losses on occasion of a great fair; here, however, he met with even worse fortune than before, for he was forbidden by the magistrates to exhibit his performances at all, and left the place filled with bitter resentment, and protesting that he would never again show himself in those places which had been visited by Father Pinamonti.

The unceasing labours of Father Peter contributed greatly to sanctify the whole people of the

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Valtellina and Chiavenna, but the constant example of his edifying virtues was far more efficacious. The whole population were filled with admiration, to see the good old man refraining entirely from the use of wine, which is there considered a great delicacy, and journeying invariably with naked feet among those sharp rocks, to cross which it is usual with many to have their shoes purposely strengthened with nails. Above all, the sanctification of these people was accomplished by the tender devotion which he laboured to inspire into their hearts towards the exalted Mother of God, blessing them on the last day of the mission with the precious relic of her holy veil. This relic was presented to him by the Grand Duke of Tuscany, and Father Pinamonti used to expose it on a rich altar in the open air, and with it bless water, which, distributed among the people, has been known to effect many miraculous cures in favour of all classes of sick persons. Of the miracles which happened in the Valtellina, there are three of public notoriety. The first was of a lady, who, being afflicted with an enormous wen, found herself instantly relieved by bathing it with the water of this holy relic. The second is related of a man who was so deaf that he could not hear the sound of the bells, but upon applying to his ears the blessed water, recovered the full use of his hearing. Another man who had been for a long time a cripple, bathed his legs in the water, and was instantly cured. These wonderful events inflamed the hearts of the people with such a

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singular confidence in the blessed Mother of God, that when Father Pinamonti proposed to them the devotion of communicating on nine successive Sundays in honour of the nine months the immaculate Virgin bore her divine Son in her womb, many of the curates declared, that in their churches every Sunday appeared like the Paschal solemnity.

From what has already been said of the missions given by Father Pinamonti in the Valtellina and Chiavenna, each one may now understand the amount of good effected by him during the course of so many years, and such a number of missions, of which we do not possess an account. Yet do we know of innumerable wonderful conversions made in all parts, of men given up to all sorts of impiety, abandoned women, and notorious robbers; for as we remarked before, Father Peter had received from God a wonderful power of softening the most hardened hearts, and converting the most perverse. One man had kept con-
ntly by him for three years a vessel filled with
n to destroy certain individuals who were his
s; but having cast himself at the feet of the
e conceived such a lively horror and
for his guilt, that, covered with con-
immediately went and brought the
which he made a pleasing sacrifice
infamous robber, moved by the ex-
he good father, suddenly changed
a short time finished his days
ments of repentance.
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two men, so fierce and barbarous, that they had nothing to point them out as human beings but the outward appearance. It will be sufficient to remark, that, entertaining an implacable hatred for an enemy, they put him to a most cruel death, and then like savage tigers, tearing out his liver, they roasted and ate it. These two monsters were recommended by a priest to Father Pinamonti, thinking that nothing but the inflamed zeal of this father could bring them to a Christian life. And the priest who relates this has no doubt, that by his efficacious remonstrances they were led to true repentance. But, I do not intend to mention here all the extraordinary conversions which the charity of Father Peter wrought in the hearts of his penitents; indeed, the greatest part of them are buried under the inviolable secret of confession, as the father, either from caution or his great humility, used not to speak of such things. And these few which have been recorded, we have learned from one who obtained a knowledge of them by other means.

CHAPTER XII.

HIS MANNER OF LIFE IN THE MISSIONS.

The principal means by which Father Pinamonti gained innumerable souls to God, was his exemplary manner of life, and the sweet odour of his consummate virtues, for which he was

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held in the highest esteem by all classes of persons. In the Valtellina he obtained much esteem, as I have shown, by going constantly with naked feet, and taking nothing but water to drink.

Still greater, no doubt, was the respect with which he was looked upon in every place where he went, for a period of thirty-eight years, on account of his edifying manner of life, keeping always innocent and free from sin, practising the most astonishing mortification and humility, and far removed from every attachment to the things of earth, and wholly inflamed with those of heaven. We pass over at present his interior, which displayed itself even outwardly, by a certain beauty which gained the love of all. His exterior deportment alone was of itself more than sufficient to inspire devotion; for his clothing was so mean and poor, his bearing so humble and modest, and he was so amiable and sweet in his conversation, that his every action and every motion breathed an air of virtue; nor could anything ever be remarked in his conduct, which was not regulated according to the most strict rules of sound reason.

And, to come to particulars, his repose was always very scanty, especially when we consider his age, and the weakness in the head to which he was subject. He took his short allowances of rest during the night, at one time stretched upon the naked boards, or on a little straw, at another seated on a small chair; and in the morning used to derange the bed which had been pre-

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pared for him by the kindness of his host, so as to make it appear that he had taken his repose very agreeably upon it. When either during the missions, or at any other time, he found himself obliged to sleep on a bed, he generally managed to introduce a board between the sheets, that he might not be without some suffering, even during that short period which nature required for its support. And a board of this nature was found in the bed whereon he expired.

Before the dawn of morning, and shortly after midnight he concluded his short sleep, by inflicting on himself a most severe discipline, previous to putting on his clothes or striking a light in his room; and this practice he continued all his life without mercy. These disciplines were all in addition to those he took publicly in the penitential processions and in the evening. That the sound of the blows might not be so distinctly heard, he composed disciplines made of twisted iron thread, which caused greater pain, but resounded less. And yet so unmerciful were the strokes with which he tore his flesh, for the space of a quarter of an hour, that the noise was audible even to a distance. One who had frequently observed him perform this cruel operation, says, that after scourging himself for some time, he ceased awhile, and then returned again to the discipline several times. And it is my opinion that he made these interruptions, so as to apply this mortification to his various wants. It was not during the time of the missions only that he practised these secret mortifications; they

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were continued throughout the entire year, whether he was lodging in hotels or private houses, and neither the exhaustion caused by the long journeys, nor any extraordinary labours were ever considered sufficient reason to dispense with them.

In addition to this infliction, he every morning put on a hair shirt, or iron girdle, thus mortifying the flesh, that the spirit might be more watchful in the service of God. He never spent less than an hour and a half in prayer, before he quitted his apartment. He then went to say Mass, carrying with him, as has been said, his slippers, that he might wear them only at the time of the holy sacrifice. What were the lights with which his mind was favoured, in these daily communications with his Saviour, or the affections which burned in his breast, it has not been given to us to know: for it was a particular privilege granted to his humility, to keep concealed from the knowledge of men the heavenly secrets which passed between himself and God. This, however, we do know, that as a glowing fire cannot retain all the heat, but must disperse its rays, and send forth a portion of its ardour, so that divine fire which Father Peter kept enclosed within his breast, was sometimes seen to shine, and exhibit its inward flame in his countenance. And when he had finished Mass, his face was often observed to be all inflamed with ardour, like a seraph.

Immediately after supper in the evening, he retired to his room to pray, and from that time until after the Divine Sacrifice the next morning,

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he never allowed any thought of this world to enter his mind, that he might be more perfectly absorbed in God; thinking that it was in vain to attempt to administer to the wants of others, before he had attended to those of his own soul. An illustrious personage once sent to him in great haste a man bearing a letter of importance; it was presented to him whilst he was occupied with his evening devotions, and he would neither open nor look at it, but left it sealed upon his table until next morning after Mass, that his devotions might not meet with any manner of distraction.

In proportion as he was attentive to the care of his interior, so was he negligent and indifferent about his body. After Mass, he used to go straight to his confessional, without taking any nourishment whatever, and there remain six or seven hours, without ever thinking of leaving it to go and take the necessary support for his body; and his companions found it necessary to send for him repeatedly, and even to draw him as it were by force from his post. It was observed, that before he sat down to table, he stood for a short time with his eyes tenderly fixed on his crucifix, which he kept on the table in his room, and then read a few sentences in some book of devotion, to nourish his mind with holy thoughts, at the same time that he was administering support to his body. All his conversations at table were on spiritual affairs, for the most part, treating on difficult and perplexing cases of conscience, which came under daily notice in the missions; and on such matters he showed consummate skill and prudence, in

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giving his companions safe directions for the well-conducting and absolving of penitents. Occupied in these exercises of the mind, he attended to nothing less than the taste and quality of the food that was presented to him. He never showed the least partiality to anything that might be agreeable to his palate: he was equally content with every sort of food; and the plainer and more scanty the preparations, the more joyfully did he pass the time in devout conversation.

He was always very abstemious in eating, and still more so in drinking. One who observed him attentively at his meals, asserts his belief, that his whole repast could not exceed eight ounces. He could never be prevailed upon to change the little salad of raw herbs, which he took in the evening, for the most part without any seasoning or condiment, though his age and the weakness of his stomach demanded some nourishing food. Of the more dainty dishes he took a very small quantity, so as to tantalize his taste, and then leave all the rest, to mortify himself the more severely. Of ordinary meats, he always chose that which was the least palatable, not feeling a relish for any food, without the seasoning of mortification. He deprived himself of wine by degrees, and all the time of his old age he drank nothing but pure water. Only when in company with distinguished characters, or entertained by eminent hosts, did he consent to pour half an ounce of wine into his cup at the end of dinner, in order to thank his hosts the more courteously; and though abundantly diluted with water, he would never drink

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the whole of his little allowance of wine. He concealed this his abstinence under motives of health, bringing under the advantage of the body what was beneficial to the soul, and thereby practising both mortification and humility at the same time.

Being so aged and infirm, and spending the whole morning in the confessional fasting, he began in the last years of his life, to suffer considerably from this excessive abstinence, and found himself spent, and his strength quite exhausted, when he retired from the confessional. He was, therefore, solicited by his companions to take some little refreshment after mass; and after much repugnance he yielded to their entreaties, but would take nothing for his refreshment but an old crust of bread, which had been previously left at table, and he always chose the hardest crust, which he folded up in a cloth, and sometimes kept for whole months. It was enough to excite the compassion of any one to see the good old man gnawing his bread, which was as hard as a stone. But still more astonishing was it to hear the complaints which he made at being induced to take that miserable refection in the morning; feeling a scruple for having violated the custom established from the very beginning of his missionary career: and at last he felt such remorse at having so far condescended to administer to the requirements of nature, that he could not be easy until he had abandoned it altogether. After his frugal dinner, he was accustomed to retire to his room, to take a little repose, but this was not for more than a quarter of an hour,

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and, for the most part, did not exceed the time of a Credo; and he immediately hastened to his confessional, which he never left till night, except to give catechism.

The employment of his time was truly a singular gift of Father Peter. He was never seen a moment idle, being always occupied, either in something for the good of his neighbour, or the sanctification of his own soul. During the excessive heat of the dog-days, when even Father Segneri found it necessary to go out a little in the evening to breathe the fresh air, Father Pinamonti, instead of seeking any relief from the heat, repaired instantly to his room to pray or to read. Whilst going about giving his missions, scarcely did he set foot in any of our colleges than he requested his companion to take his cloak without delay, and accompany him on his business without the college, which consisted in every act of charity: he then resumed his journey, as if he were insensible to fatigues, and to the inclemencies of the weather. Accordingly, one of his companions, astonished at seeing a man of so weak a constitution and oppressed with age incessantly toiling and enduring fatigues, frequently said to him, "How does it happen, that in the midst of so many labours you never find yourself spent with fatigue?" and the Father without making any reply, would go on with his labours. The few hours, which in the first days of the missions, were not occupied in giving catechism or hearing confessions, he knew well how to spend to the best advantage, retiring to his room to

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write some of his little works. In the Valtellina, where he laboured indefatigably with so much fruit, he spent a portion of the night in composing various treatises against the heretics of those parts, and left a number of copies of them among the curates, for the advantage of the poor people, who had been deluded by the preachers. Nor was it difficult for him in a few pages to refute the errors of the heresiarchs, and to explain the belief of the Catholic Church, on account of the diligence with which he had studied those points, in collecting materials for that learned work of his, "The Unbeliever without excuse," which was sent to the press by Father Segneri. Now, whoever will reflect with attention on this manner of life invariably pursued by Father Pinamonti for no less than thirty-eight years, will, I think, be able to form a pretty correct idea of the immense good which his apostolic labours for the salvation of his neighbour effected.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CHARITY AND HUMILITY WHICH HE PRACTISED IN THE MISSIONS.

The immaculate and religious life of Father Peter gained him the highest veneration, so that he was regarded as a living model of virtue, and extolled as an Apostle. But that which principally excited the love of all was his charity and

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humility; for with these two virtues he adorned and beautified all his actions, rendering them more attractive and amiable. The pains which he suffered in his head were almost continual, yet charity, which ruled as the mistress over all his other affections, made him, as it were, insensible to his own sufferings, that he might relieve those of others. With a joyful and serene countenance, joined with the most affectionate manners, he was always ready to assist any one who was willing to have recourse to him. No one oppressed with sadness after applying to the charity of the father, ever left him without being relieved and content; there was no conscience agitated by scruples, or molested by the enemy of souls, for which he was not, by his soothing advice, an angel of peace; nor did ever a sick or miserable creature fail to derive immediate succour from his hands.

Towards the poor his tenderness was unbounded. At the sight of a beggar at a distance, he was moved with compassion, and felt his heart as it were wounded with the afflictions of others. He never met a poor man in need to whom he did not, if possible, afford the relief that was asked, and send away contented by the alms he received. On his journeys he very frequently gave alms in money, and this without the least regard to his own wants; and if others have given with more abundance of means to the poor, none ever surpassed him in the generosity of the heart. His love in assisting the needy was as great as if all had been his brothers, or, to speak more correctly,

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as if he had been relieving the Son of God Himself, who presented Himself to him, clothed in the garb of a beggar. Thus recognising in the poor the person of Christ, he did not wait to be asked, but he went himself in search of the poor, as if he were going to receive an alms, and not to confer one. He never appeared so delighted and in such high spirits, as when an opportunity offered itself to do good to his poor.

He would often, when journeying onwards, retire to refresh himself near to some fountain, or within the shade of the woods; and whenever he saw at a distance any poor man, he would immediately rise, and run to present to him a portion of his frugal fare, for indeed he felt a stronger desire to feed the hungry than they themselves to be fed. The same happened when he was in the public hotels, no sooner did any mendicants appear, than he rose from table and afforded them succour. His companions could find no better way of pleasing him than to collect on a dish a portion of their food, and present it to Father Pinamonti for his poor; and the delight which he experienced in these holy occupations was beyond description.

In Tirano, where he was giving the missions, in 1702, there was a poor sick man stretched upon a miserable bed of straw, all covered with such a hideous leprosy, that no one could be found who had the heart to approach and console him, on account of the intolerable stench. No sooner did the news of the wretched state of this leper reach the ears of Father Peter, than he

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felt those words of the Psalmist spoken to his heart: "Tibi derelictus est pauper." At first he was perplexed within himself, not knowing whether he should prefer this act of charity to the public ministry of the mission, in which he was at the time actually engaged; but his tender love for the poor, which could suffer no repulse, suggested to him a means of satisfying both duties. This was to curtail his hours of repose, so as to be able to serve the poor leper, and yet not neglect his functions. As long, therefore, as the mission continued, he visited him every morning and evening, consoling him and entertaining him at considerable length with holy conversation. Every day he brought him a plate of the best food that had appeared at his table: every day he assisted him with his own hands, in that tender manner with which a loving mother assists her dear son: and whilst every one else, at the bare sight of the poor creature, was seized with horror at the stench and hideousness of the spectacle, Father Pinamonti, on the contrary, found his delight in serving and caressing him, seeing, by the true light of faith, in the person of this poor leper that of the Lord Himself, who became for us the poorest among the poor, and took upon Himself the filthy leprosy of our sins.

Not less admirable was the charity he showed towards inn-keepers, and all persons of a like class. When he had to travel a journey of many days, before he reached the place for the next mission, he was often obliged to betake himself to the public inns. Here he sometimes met with

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rude and impious characters, who, not content with a reasonable pay, which was offered to them by the secular companion of the father, began full of ill temper to utter complaints and threats; and what is worse, to vomit forth the most horrible oaths and blasphemies. To close these mouths of hell, which struck deeper into the heart than on the ears of the good father, he gave orders that the man should receive what he asked. Then by a good and sensible reprehension, he seriously admonished him never more to allow such diabolical language to escape his lips; and after giving him with great affection one of his little books of devotion, he left him as much edified by his charity, as repentant for his own wickedness.

All these acts of charity he adorned by a lustre of rare humility. Whatever action he performed in behalf of his neighbour, whether it were serving the sick, feeding the hungry, or consoling the afflicted, he always accompanied it with such a modest countenance and an humble abasement of himself, as never failed to excite tenderness and devotion. He looked upon all with the eye of a servant; he assisted all as his masters, and especially the poorest and most wretched. From the lowly servitude which he extended to all sorts of persons, arose in the breasts of all a great liberty and confidence in recurring to the charity of Father Peter for relief both to body and soul, in all places and at all times, convinced that at all hours they would be received with the utmost readiness, heard with patience, and con-

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soled with tender affection. Hence he was venerated by all classes of persons, and looked upon in the light of a saint.

The veneration of his companions daily increased, from having before their eyes continually examples of such charity and humility. Though Father Pinamonti was the oldest and most experienced among them, yet he submitted to all in every occurrence as if he had been the lowest. The endowments of nature and the gifts of grace, with which he was so richly furnished, were concealed by his humility, not less from his own view than from that of others. Whatever good was effected in the missions, he attributed to the merits and virtues of his companions, as if he had no part whatever therein. And this humble opinion of himself he frequently expressed both in words and writing. It was his ordinary custom not to speak of the missions, and when any one introduced the subject and put some question of importance to him concerning them, he answered it briefly, and in such a manner as to make the whole appear to be the result of the labours of others, and in nowise due to his exertions. He published several accounts of missions given with Father Segneri, and other companions, which accounts were applauded for the talent and judgment displayed in the composition, and by others for the simplicity and purity of the style; but no one ever knew who was the author of them. Yet still more admirably was the humility with which he endeavoured to make appear as the work of others the immense good he effected

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in his neighbours, as if he had been merely an idle spectator of the whole. He obtained the same from him who wrote the Life of Father Paul Segneri, as I have mentioned before, persuading him effectually not to insert any honourable mention of himself in the Life of that Father.

I willingly relate these little facts, because from them, as from the minute features in a portrait, we may arrive at the true image of his virtues. These things may appear of little moment to those who measure sanctity by miracles and prodigies; but they will not appear so to those who judge of the amount of sanctity by virtue, which consists in the total renunciation of self, and in the plentitude of true charity; for prodigies and extraordinary actions, with which, however, the virtues of Father Pinamonti were adorned, are, as it were, a lamp which serves to render sanctity more apparent, but not more precious.

CHAPTER XIV.

HIS METHOD OF LIFE IN OUR HOUSES.

Precious was the life of Father Peter in the missions, on account of so many painful journeys, the gaining of so many souls to God, and the daily practice of such heroic virtues. Not less precious, in the opinion of those who are experienced in spiritual matters, was the edifying and perfect life he led in our noviciates and colleges. He used to set out for the country after

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the conclusion of Lent, and in the beginning of November return among the fathers of the Society. This sojourn he made in different places, sometimes in Florence, at others in Rome or Modena; the reason why he changed his place of abode was to accomodate her serene highness, Lucrezia di Modena, who had chosen him as her director, and wished to have him always with her in Rome, or Modena; and so great was the consolations which she derived from his instructions, that though she was repeatedly solicited, she would never listen to any suggestion for parting with him. And it is worthy of remark, that though she never made the least difficulty in changing the confessor whom she had during the absence of Father Pinamonti, yet she was inflexible in refusing to give up him who served her only a part of the year.

But wherever he was, in Modena, Rome, or Florence, he was always the same in the regular observance of religious discipline: leaving behind him in every place the sweet fragrance of his virtues, so that as in the missions he was extolled as a saint by the people, and revered as an apostolic man, so in our houses he was universally esteemed by his friends as an angel of peace, and a true model of perfection. It was wonderful to see this servant of God, who in his youth was constantly indisposed, and who actually passed the greatest part of the year in the country, and according to his own expression, out of hearing of the bell, to see him, I say, in our colleges and houses of probation, as regular and attentive

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in his conduct, as punctual and obedient as a novice in the heat of his first fervour, but with a sanctity greater than that of a novice; no one ever being able to detect him in the slightest infringement of religious discipline.

He distributed the hours of the day in the following manner. The greatest portion of the morning he spent with God in exercises of piety; and when he was not engaged with the duchess, devoted the hours which remained after his devotions to compiling materials for the works of Father Segneri, or to composing his own little treatises, so beneficial to the sanctification of souls. After dinner, he every day left the house, to go and serve the sick, or to exercise some similar act of charity: nor was he ever known to set foot out of doors for recreation, or to afford relief to his head. The evening he spent partly in reciting the divine office, partly in prayer before the blessed sacrament, and in visiting and consoling the sick who were in the house. The best part of these employments, however, was the uninterrupted exercise of the most exalted virtues, by which he adorned even the most insignificant of his actions, raising it to a loftier sphere and to a more sublime degree of perfection. A certain father at Modena, who had been familiar with Father Pinamonti for many years, being asked to say what he thought of this manner of life in that college, replied, "If one wished to mention all the acts of virtue he displayed, it would be necessary to write down every word he uttered, and every action he performed; for no word proceeded from his mouth, no

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motion was ever made by him, in which the light of some virtue did not shine."

And to say something in the first place about his devotion. In addition to the time which is prescribed by the rule to those in our colleges for prayer and examination, he added a considerable space of his own free will. He concluded his repose some hours before the rest, and instead of dressing himself, applied the discipline to his naked body in the middle of his room, even in the midst of the most severe winter, scourging himself, as when on the missions, for a quarter of an hour: and these he often repeated during the day, and at dead of night, for any particularly urgent wants, or during Novenas, in preparation for different feasts during the year, to which he had an especial devotion. Besides taking the discipline, he put on his hair shirt, or iron chain, and with this excellent prelude, began the day. His morning prayer he used to prolong to an hour and a half, for the hour prescribed by the rule to all our religious appeared to his fervent soul too short. Besides his morning exercise, he spent another half hour in the evening before the blessed sacrament, as we are informed by one who was his companion for many years in the Noviciate of Florence, and in the missions.

The indisposition in his head was no impediment to his prayers, as if, in those divine operations, the soul did not depend on the state of the body; for to find God, it was not necessary for him to weary himself by a long and tedious search, but in a moment his whole heart and soul were placed in

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the presence and in the love of the supreme Good. So familiar had it become to him to raise his mind to divine things, that he, more than once, remarked to one of the fathers, his intimate friend, that he could no longer meditate in his prayers. From this we may in some measure conjecture to what a degree of prayer he had been raised by God, as his humility has left us no other information, nor any other guide to discover it. Every morning, before approaching the altar, he cleansed his soul by a strict examination of his conscience, and by sacramental confession, accompanying it with such lively sentiments of sorrow, that he who heard his confession for a length of time, does not recollect to have witnessed in any penitent such hatred for mortal sin as Father Pinamonti showed for the slightest fault which bore the shadow of a venial sin. Indeed, it is a property of delicate consciences to feel more intensely a slight scar, than others do a mortal wound. Thus inflamed by prayer, and purified in confession, he celebrated Mass with much devotion, but without affectation, restraining as well as he could those affections which were enkindled in his breast at the presence of his God. His time for thanksgiving after Mass differed according to the favours he received from his Divine Guest, but was never less than a quarter.

He always recited the canonical hours on his knees in his room. The reciting them in this place and in this position, was for him much more than simply praying vocally; for he made his own those sentiments of the prophets, expressed

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with such variety, and such elevated and devout affections. In front of the praying desk in his room, he used to keep a number of rude pictures, representing the passion of our Lord, which he varied according to the different hours that he recited, and the mysteries he contemplated, so as to unite his mind and heart more intimately with God. An intimate friend of his relates, that the devotion of Father Peter was so sweet and amiable, without any mixture of affectation or austerity, that it inspired piety into others. Every morning after Mass he spent an hour in the reading of some devout book. And in fact all his studies and his compositions were nothing else than a continual exercise of prayer and meditation; all his works being full of that unction and those devout affections which clearly show them to have been written with heavenly lights at the foot of the crucifix.

CHAPTER XV.

HIS BEHAVIOUR IN THE MIDST OF COURTS.

From being thus continually employed in these holy exercises, his mind became so filled with eternal maxims, and his heart with holy affections, that wherever he was, whether in the house or out, in his private apartment or in a court, he lived entirely separated from everything of this world, appearing as a statue, dead to all

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sensible objects. In the midst of courts he lived as if in the desert, without being at all gained by the allurements of those distracting scenes. He cared not about knowing political affairs, or cabinet secrets; nor did he pay attention to the news of battles, victories, promotions, and conquests, which every day resounded in the mouths of the courtiers; esteeming such things as mere trifles for children in comparison with the affairs of eternity. Any communication with the great, and persons in high offices he always dreaded and avoided, when the service of God did not require him to do otherwise. In Rome, where he dwelt some years, he so far shunned all familiarity with those cardinals who esteemed and loved him, that he did not wish even to be seen by them, as if he were apprehensive of being corrupted by their very looks.

His serene Highness, the Grand Duke Cosmo III., a friend not less of good men than of virtue itself, made great account of Father Pinamonti, and would have wished, not only to see much of the father himself, but that he would converse familiarly with the cavaliers of his court; knowing how well his pleasing manners contributed to inspire devotion. He used to complain to one of the superiors at Florence, of the repugnance shown by Father Peter to appear in his antechamber. But these complaints did not succeed in alluring him to the court, from which he absented himself, that he might fly all honours which were odious to his humility, and might be able to attend more freely to the service of the poor and the sick, especially

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those who were the most wretched. Every time that he was seen to enter the antechamber of his serene highness, it was a certain proof to the courtiers, either that he was expressly sent for, or that he was forcibly brought thither by some business that immediately concerned the glory of God; these two being the only motives sufficiently powerful to draw him to court. He entered the palace with such humility, and in such a mortified manner, that he might have been taken for a criminal cited before the tribunal of justice. It was amusing to compare the honours heaped upon him by the kindness of that most pious prince, with the sensible confusion which the modest father experienced, totally buried, as he was, in his humility, by which his serene highness saw more distinctly his estimable virtues. In consequence of the intense regard which the prince had for Father Pinamonti, all the cavaliers about the court vied with one another in serving him, accompanying him, and honouring him with all manner of attention. And the poor father, seeing himself thus treated as a great man, was grieved thereat, and betrayed such confusion in his countenance, that one of the courtiers remarking it, said to the rector of the noviciate of Pinti, "Your Father Pinamonti appears to me to leave the palace as if he were disappointed."

In Modena, where it was necessary for him to attend the court more than in other places, he left still more remarkable examples of his extraordinary virtue. His appearance and stay in the antechambers of his serene highness were regu-

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lated by pure necessity. Madame Lucrezia very frequently sent for him, on account of the consolation and profit she received from her conferences with such a director and master of the spiritual life: and he came to the court with such an humble and modest demeanour, that there was not one, who at the very sight of his exterior, did not venerate him as a saint. All his familiar conversations were on God and eternal truths, and he never allowed himself to propose any subject to the duchess herself which did not immediately concern the spiritual good of souls. These wise cautions adopted by Father Peter in the court at Modena, may be better understood from the pen of a learned father, who was for a long time an eye-witness of them: he writes thus: "In regard to his conduct at court, I have had better opportunities of knowing it, because, in the first place, I was appointed to supply his place as confessor to the duchess, when he set out on the missions; and afterwards I was his companion, confessing the young duke her son, whilst he attended to the mother. During all this time, which continued many years, I can attest, that there was never any one in the court, high or low, who did not entertain the most marked respect for the father, and esteem him as a living saint. He conducted himself with such modesty and affability, that it was quite impossible any other idea could be formed of him. Notwithstanding the familiar access afforded him by the duke, and the confidence reposed in him by the mother, he never altered his modest carriage, nor ceased to be

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retired within himself. He was agreeable with all, humble and affable towards all, but familiar with no one. There was no one at court who did not love Father Pinamonti as a father, and did not think that he was beloved by him. No one ever flattered himself with being able to involve him in affairs of his own interest; if the matter was not wholly spiritual, and unquestionably for the glory of God and the good of souls, no one thought of being able to render Father Peter favourable to it." From this short account we may collect what was the deportment of Father Pinamonti at court, and how great ought to be the caution of those who exercise a similar duty of confessor to princes, that they may be able to benefit others without injuring their own souls, and without meeting with those dangerous snares, to which they are too much exposed, who, under pretence of promoting the spiritual good of souls in courts, imprudently entangle themselves in temporal concerns and political matters, which are quite foreign to their duties, and too often disgrace the religious character.

CHAPTER XVI.

OF HIS STRICT OBSERVANCE OF DISCIPLINE.

The truly saintly life of Father Peter gained him a veneration among his companions, not inferior to that which he had acquired in the courts of princes. To acquire the reputation of

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perfect virtue, is a most difficult thing where you are exposed to the censure of all, where all see, observe, and examine, without even the most trivial action being able to escape their notice. Notwithstanding this, the life of Father Pinamonti in our houses was so regular, that the more it was remarked, the more it was admired and venerated by all; no single transgression could be detected, nor any of those slight imperfections, from which even the most exemplary are generally not altogether exempt.

It was astonishing to see in a man, who the greater part of the year was unaccustomed to the regular discipline of a religious community, such punctuality in the observance of all the customs and rules, the more mortifying as they were the more minute, without ever infringing any of the laws. He was always a great enemy to all singularity, and his most earnest study was to conform himself to the regular mode of life in all the most trivial ordinances, if trivial those things can be called which are established by God. For this reason, they who know how to estimate virtue rightly, admired the perfection of his conduct the more, because it had less of singularity.

It is true, however, that without any show of singularity, he was most singular in accommodating himself to religious observance with such punctuality, that greater could not have been desired from a novice full of holy fervour. At the first sound of the bell calling him to any of the common duties, he would leave a letter half

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formed, if he happened to be writing, or if he were engaged in conversation, would cut short a word, that he might, without the least delay, hasten to the place where obedience called him; and neither human respect, nor any important business could induce him to delay one moment, recognizing in the sound of the bell the voice of God. This readiness appears to have been in him rather a second nature, than a command of the will; so habituated had he become by constant watchfulness in observing with facility and delight regular discipline. And, indeed, so much did he love obedience to rule, that he would not consent to be dispensed by the charity of the superiors from any of those duties, from which, in consideration of his age and habitual infirmities, they judged he ought to be exempted. He did not allow himself to led away by that specious mistake into which many fall, of absenting themselves from many public duties, under the pretence of being occupied in affairs of higher importance and of greater service to God. This maxim he had firmly fixed in his mind, that the highest perfection of a religious man consists in the exact observance of the rules, which, like so many settled and authoritative superiors, assure us that everything we do is most pleasing to our Lord at the time.

The last of his superiors in the noviciate at Florence, confesses that he was struck with admiration at the punctuality with which he attended to the smallest regulation, never once omitting, old as he was, to serve at table and in the

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kitchen on the day allotted to him, according to the custom in our society. He would never consent, in consideration of his important occupations, to be dispensed from appearing with the other fathers at the first table, however precious to him were the hours of the morning, during which only he was able to apply to study. Whenever he had on hand affairs of such moment as to require his absence from the first table, he went with great submission to obtain leave from the superior; nor would he accept of general leave, esteeming it a grievance and a hardship to be deprived of the merit of the inconvenience, and the humiliation of asking permission each time. In the noviciate at Florence, he had for his companion one of the fathers, who, at the approach of spring, accompanied him on the missions. During winter he every day after dinner went out to perform various works of charity, and he never once left the house without performing that act of dependence and humility, of asking this companion, as his superior, for permission. To dispense with this submission, and the no small labour of going about the house in search of the superior, would have been to wrest from his hands a valuable treasure.

In making these requests of his superiors, he was at the same time most exact and respectful. The rector of the noviciate at Rome assures us that he was filled with confusion whenever Father Peter entered his room to make any little demand. So respectful was the modesty of this servant

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of God, that when his companion at Florence was unable to go out with him, he never made bold to ask for a substitute; he would not even accept one, unless in cases of urgent necessity, and spontaneously offered by the rector, who knew how much he suffered from remaining in his room after dinner, when he was not able to apply to any study. But his modesty preferred to endure this annoyance, otherwise so sensible to him, than to lay the least burthen to the community. All these things may appear slight and insignificant to those who merely hear the relation of them, but they will not appear such to those who practise them in a like degree. And, indeed, they are reputed by masters of a spiritual life a vein of the most precious gold and the highest merit; for true perfection consists not in the greatness of the actions, but in the purity of the intention, and in the mortification of self, without which these acts of virtue cannot long be practised; and the more trivial and frequent they are, the more troublesome and repugnant they become to self-love, which finds not in them that nourishment of vanity which may be found in works that are more extraordinary and splendid.

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CHAPTER XVII.

HIS OBEDIENCE.

The regular observance of discipline bears with it great merit and perfection. Yet of still greater merit and higher perfection, is obedience to our immediate superiors; who, being in their commands changeable, and not guided by general laws, render more difficult, and at the same time more precious the exercise of this virtue, the true characteristic and essential property of the religious state.

Now Father Pinamonti, in proportion as he distinguished himself in exact conformity with the rules, so much was he remarkable for the virtue of obedience, subjecting himself to the commands of his superiors with promptness of execution, fulness of the will, and submission of the understanding, which last is a virtue truly rare and remarkable in a man of such talent, learning, and experience. To exercise obedience in this heroic degree, he did not examine the thing which was commanded, nor the person by whom the command was given, but in the orders of any superior he recognized the voice and command of God. He showed that he acknowledged the person of God in that of his superiors, by the submission and reverence which he observed in speaking to, and appearing before them; so much so, that many of them were ashamed to see a

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man of such merit and eminence so humble and lowly in their presence. But still more clearly did he show it by the pains he took to promote in others reverence for the persons, and respect for the commands of superiors. Hence, whenever he heard any one break out into complaints against the superior, or his manner of government, he immediately exerted himself in his defence, and discovered more arguments in his favour than if he had been upholding his own cause; by this means showing how well he united the prudence of the serpent with the simplicity of the dove. The prudence of the serpent he used in combating with sagacity and talent the opposition made to the persons and government of superiors, and he exemplified the simplicity of the dove by the docility with which he subjected his own understanding to whatever command was issued by any superior.

But this ready obedience was not confined to those who were really his superiors; for he submitted himself with the utmost condescension to those who had no special authority over him, considering every one as his superior who afforded him an opportunity of practising this virtue, and denying his own will. It is incredible how great was his dependance upon Father Segneri, for twenty-six years that he accompanied him on the missions. On every occasion he studied most carefully to accomodate himself to the inclination of Father Paul, subjecting himself to his wishes, and conforming with his every motion, with as much readiness and alacrity as if he had served

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him, not as a companion, but as a staff serves an old man, which moves solely to please another; and this is the true rule of perfect obedience. Whoever would compare the obedience so excellently delineated by our holy Founder with that shown by Father Pinamonti to Father Segneri, would, I think, find the latter an admirable copy of that most perfect original. Nor was his obedience restricted to the particular duties of the missions, it extended over the whole of his conduct, in their journeys, their hours of repose and refreshment: and in every particular of their manner of life and actions, he showed such dependance as could not have been exceeded by the most fervent novice in the cloister. And with such rigour did he practise this virtue, that he even scrupled at being sometimes withdrawn for never so short a time from what was prescribed by Father Segneri. I will relate one instance of this. In the month of April, 1687, Father Segneri, according to his usual custom, set out on the missions, directing his labours to the dioceses of Parma and Piacenza. Father Pinamonti could not follow him immediately, because, at the time of his departure, he was attacked by a malady which confined him to his bed for a length of time. I know not what gave rise to this indisposition, but this I know, that Father Pinamonti attributed the whole blame to himself, for not having fully complied with the directions of Father Paul; and therefore, no sooner was he recovered, than, filled grief for his fault, he hastened to Father Segneri, who was at that moment

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retired in his room, and throwing himself at his feet, he confessed his offence and begged pardon for having wished to direct himself according to his own caprice; saying that he was justly punished by God for it by so long a sickness, and deprived of the happiness of co-operating in the salvation of souls. He then protested in sentiments of true humility, that for the future he wished to be entirely dependant on his suggestions, and remain totally at his disposal. These sentiments and protestations awakened no small tenderness in the heart of Father Segneri, and proved a subject of the greatest edification to all those, who, happening to be near the room, had the good fortune to hear them.

A like dependance he showed towards those companions whom he took with him during the twelve succeeding years, although they were both in age and experience so far inferior to him. In no affair that concerned their journeys, or the functions of the mission, did he ever resolve without asking their advice, and he consulted their wishes and inclinations as if he had been their inferior; knowing well that he could not act with greater profit, than by denying his own will and subjecting his judgment to that of others.

The esteem he had for obedience, and his desire to be subject in everything to the disposal of others, implanted in his breast an extreme horror of being in authority, and made him use all diligence in withdrawing himself from every kind of superiority. He was several times proposed as rector and master of novices, in the house of pro-

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bation at Rome; and was afterwards destined to instruct in the Noviciate of Florence those fathers, who, having finished their studies, were going through a third year of probation. He succeeded in avoiding these offices, through pretext of the weakness in his head, but the real motive was his desire to live under obedience, and not to abandon his missions. He could not, however, with all his endeavours, escape being elected for a time Vice-rector and superior of the Noviciate at Ponte; and it would be difficult to say which was the greater, whilst he occupied this position, the consolation of those fathers to have such a superior and master of the spiritual life, or the affliction of Father Pinamonti, on account of his extraordinary repugnance for that office. Many fathers who were residing in the house at the time, relate, that during the whole time, which was not less than six months, he was so disconsolate and low-spirited, that he could not take the necessary repose at night, nor even his meals at table. The poor father found himself doubly afflicted at heart; since he felt a scruple on the one hand, that he did not fulfil his duty, and on the other, dreaded that the good accounts conveyed to his superiors at Rome of his administration might detain him still longer under the present cross. His greatest relief under these thorny troubles, was to have recourse to God in prayer; and so earnestly did he apply to our Lord, and importune his superiors, that at length he obtained permission to cease from his present occupation, and return to his holy missions. At the first news of his exemption

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from the charge, his countenance brightened up, and he ran with the utmost delight to the new superior, to give him notice of his dismissal, and to put himself under obedience to him; at the same time giving him a most minute account of his administration, as if he had been a novice. The more, in fact, he increased in years, the more he became like a child, in the perfection of obedience.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HIS MORTIFICATION, AND DOMINION OVER HIS PASSIONS.

In eminent servants of God it is not the outward character that most deserves our attention, it is what is concealed within the interior, where the model of perfection is in course of formation. The most important part of this great work consists in regulating the depraved appetites of the old man, and subjecting to the dictates of reason the rebellious passions of our corrupt nature, by a continual war against ourselves; for that peaceful dominion which was enjoyed by our first parent through the means of original justice, can only be hoped for in part by us, and gained by labour and incessant mortification. This is undoubtedly a more arduous task than punishing our own flesh, and treating it as an enemy; because though the flesh may feel a repugnance

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to chastisement, yet by custom it accomodates itself to it: whereas the irregular passions of the mind when mortified resume fresh vigour, and though dead rise into life again, by a fresh rebellion against the spirit. Consequently, to submit these to reason is much more laborious and necessary for acquiring perfection.

Now in regard to mortifying and subduing his disorderly appetites, Father Peter distinguished himself to such a degree, that more could not be desired in a man of consummate virtue. His mastery over the interior affections of the soul was such, that they seemed to possess in him no power but what reason gave them. Whenever any sudden accident occurred, his mind and even his countenance remained as calm and composed as if he had been free from those emotions which strike the mind the moment it feels itself assailed. Nor did this proceed from any dullness of intellect, or natural listlessness and stupidity, for he was of quick parts, with a ruddy complexion and fiery temperament; but it was acquired by continual mortification, and a perfect victory over the old man, whereby he became perfect master of his passions, and his whole interior.

He was careful to keep this maxim in mind, that there is no good in the world except that which conducts to the possession of the Supreme Good, nor any evil except that which deprives us of this Good. With this principle clearly laid before his understanding by the light of eternal truth, he easily regulated the sensual inclinations, which would love only present good and fly only

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present evils. He who was for many years his rector at Rome was unable to discover what passions prevailed in him, or to speak more correctly, what passion he had not subjected to the dominion of reason. A friend of his, who for a long time lived on most intimate terms with him, purposely set about to watch what impression various unexpected and unpleasant occurrences would make upon him ; but he never remarked the least alteration in him, the holy man always remaining undisturbed and tranquil in mind. And as he was unmoved in his interior, so was his exterior unchangeable, always wearing the same serene and joyful countenance under all circumstances, whether fortunate or otherwise. Every day passed in exactly the same manner with him ; at all hours he was the same, after mass and after dinner, after repose the same as after fatigue.

He evinced this composure of mind even still more clearly by a strict watchfulness over his tongue. It was his custom to be very reserved in speaking of the actions of others, very short in their praise, and never to utter a word of censure. He was never known to give utterance to any words that might give offence, or create ill-will, and he never allowed a syllable to escape his lips which was not conformable with reason. During the many years he was engaged in the missions, he had frequently to deal with rude and unmannerly people, who used the most uncivil and disrespectful language towards him ; especially when he was settling discords which

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had arisen from motives of interest and dislike, when one party pretending that he was acting with partiality towards the other, vented all their fury upon him, and assailed him with the most injurious and outrageous language. In the midst of such affronts the good Father remained tranquil, not allowing even the smile on his countenance to be disturbed, or any hasty word to escape him, and by his mildness he succeeded in establishing concord.

There were not wanting to him in the cities where he preached and in our houses grievous disappointments and sensible mortifications; yet on all these occasions he showed what a peaceful sway he held over his interior affections. He was often publicly insulted by persons of a respectable appearance in terms the most revolting, which would have raised the indignation of any breast less meek than that of Father Peter; whilst in him these insults had no effect, for he ever met them with his usual serenity. In one of the principal cities of Italy there was a dignified ecclesiastic, who, from false reports, conceived a particular aversion to this servant of God, and neglected no means to display his hatred, uttering slanders against him without consideration. All this came to the knowledge of the father, and though he was well aware how necessary it is for a missioner to have a good name in the estimation of ecclesiastics, because from them the people conceive a good or bad opionion, yet by a rare example of moderation, he wished to endure the weight of the complaints of others, and yet

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not be wanting in zeal for his reputation. Such, in fact, was his patience, that he never uttered the least complaint against his adversary, and never contradicted what had been falsely attributed to him; studying on all occasions to speak well of those who spoke ill of him.

But his patience and moderation towards his own companions were still more remarkable; showing in his conduct towards them how perfectly he had brought his passions under the obedience of reason. Not to dwell long upon this matter, I will merely remark, that for a long space of time it was necessary for him to be constantly engaged with a person of an entirely opposite disposition from himself, and whose ideas and manner of acting on many points he could not approve. Yet during the whole of this time Father Peter never showed the least sign of resentment or annoyance that could give rise to any ill feeling, nor ever utter a syllable of complaint against the man, either before him or with others, to the astonisment of all, who knew well that this proceeded not from any want of spirit on his part, but from an excess of mildness and the perfection of virtue. And the many important services which he rendered this same person served to bring out more clearly this admirable disposition.

A dispute was raised regarding some point connected with the missions, and Father Pinamonti was requested by many to speak in defence of his opinions. But he, thinking that the exercise of patience and submission was a more important

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gain, gave up without hesitation whatever was required.

From these and many other facts which it might be tedious to narrate, we may conclude that this moderation of his affections and tranquility of mind, were in him the effect of a virtue which rendered him victorious over himself, and of a perfect charity, which consumed all the vicious inclinations of the old man, as we shall see better in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIX.

HIS CHARITY.

There is no one who has had the least connection with Father Pinamonti, and has not been highly edified by his charity, which he displayed at all times and in all places, and amongst all sorts of persons. To speak particularly upon this virtue, which can be known by its effects only, I may remark that the first effect of this true charity was his wonderful talent, his accommodating himself to the disposition and nature of those with whom he was engaged; concealing their defects, enduring their troublesomeness, and bearing up with inconveniences in such an amiable manner, that he appeared transformed into a thousand shapes by means of charity. He was, we may say, kindness itself towards all, and never were heard against him any of those complaints which,

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in the most regular communities, are uttered against persons, even most eminent in virtue. In his dealings with those who were very troublesome, he never evinced the slightest sign of vexation, nor ever failed in his sweet and benevolent manner. Owing to a naturally fiery and hasty disposition, he was quick and expeditious in his actions, without being one moment idle; and he suffered excessively when brought in connection with such as caused him to lose his time. With these he always appeared as if his charity had changed his nature, and given him a quiet and sedate temper, and he concealed the loss of time, which was so precious to him.

His charity never relaxed when he received any injury, or met with any inconvenience which might rouse his indignation; but, on the contrary, like a fire which kindles with the wind, he seemed to be more inflamed by provocations. For twelve years he dwelt in the noviciate at Rome, in order to attend to the duchess of Modena, who was staying in the monastery of S. Mary Magdalene of Pazzi; and that he might be able to serve her more punctually, she supported a companion for him. Father Pinamonti, however, would not accept any regularly established companion, but contented himself with any of the brothers who might be approved at times with the superior, to accompany him out of doors only; not wishing to receive any attendance in the house, or about his own person, though he was always ready to serve every body else in the meanest offices. The companion who was the most frequently assigned

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to him during this time was an official of much goodness and simplicity, who, partly on account of his numerous occupations, and partly from the liberty which he thought proper to take, often neglected to appear in proper time at the gate, much to the annoyance of the father and her highness. And the good father would stand waiting at the gate for the brother, with his cloak over his shoulders, perfectly resigned and tranquil, without uttering a word of complaint within himself, although he was aware that his patience only served to increase the carelessness of others. When he heard that it was the intention of the superior to punish the indiscretion of the brother by a public penance, he begged with such earnestness, and besought that he should not be penanced on his account, that it was necessary to excuse him the well-merited chastisement. It appears that the father availed himself of the services of this brother more willingly than any other companion, perhaps because he afforded him more frequent opportunities of practising patience and charity.

Another effect of the charity of Father Peter was to entertain the best possible opinion of all, and to promote the same in others. It was most difficult for him to think ill of his neighbour. The more he heard faults exaggerated, the less did he give ear to them; and in those disorders which he himself had to remedy, he never allowed a bad opinion of the accused to be formed in his mind, without evidence of the crime. He displayed this charitable esteem, which he entertained for his

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neighbour, by praising every one he could, and by exercising and compassionating those whom he could not commend. From his lips was never heard to proceed a word of murmuring or discredit to others. That custom was most intolerable to him by which many take the liberty of condemning the actions of their neighbours; and frequently have his companions heard him deplore this abuse with such lively emotion, that the tears flowed from his eyes as he spoke. As soon as he heard any one blamed, he began in a beautiful manner to defend him with reasons, which, though they might not suffice to exculpate the person, were, however, more than enough to disclose his sincere charity. In one city of Italy where Father Peter happened to be, the exercises were given to a numerous audience by one of our fathers, of whom little good was spoken, either because he was not very welcome to the seculars, or for some other reason of which I am ignorant. Father Pinamonti opposed these complaints by his charity, going every day after dinner to hear him, and by ingenious reflections, drawing more matter for praise to lay to the advantage of the person than others could find reproach to bring disrepute upon him. When the faults of those he heard murmuring were too glaring to be capable of defence or excuse, he then turned to the intention, which is sometimes good, though the action be not in itself good; or to the violence of the passions, which, although it sometimes draws us into faults, serves more frequently to exercise us in virtue, and acquire merit. By

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these arts did the charity of Father Pinamonti succeed in entertaining a good opinion of all, and the same he encouraged in the breasts of others.

Yet this his charity did not confine itself to words, it passed to actions. With the utmost secrecy and great diligence he composed two entire courses of sermons for Lent, for the use of others. For one who had failed in courtesy towards him, he revised from the beginning a work which he had engaged to publish. He denied his services to none when he could be of any avail: and when he saw that it was not in his power to be of assistance, he supplied the want by the fervent desires of his charitable heart. All his cares, all his thoughts were directed solely to this point, to serve his neighbour in any manner possible; professing himself to be strictly bound to spend all his strength and his whole self for the good of those who have been in the most authentic and public manner constituted his creditors, inasmuch as he considered himself a debtor to the Son of God. Not content with the apostolic ministry of the missions, in which he laboured indefatigably for no fewer than thirty-eight years, he was inflamed with a burning desire to devote all the time that remained at his disposal, to acts of charity towards his neighbours, in their souls as well as their bodies: for these branches of charity are twin sisters, which go together hand in hand, and mutually assist one another.

To render effectual service to the souls of others, he composed those precious works of his,

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which have been published with wonderful advantage to many: and that he might be available in serving their bodies, he omitted no means which his charity could embrace. He particularly directed himself to the most wretched among the poor, because they stand in the greatest need of consolation and relief, and because that is the most sincere and noble charity which is exercised towards those who have little or no human attraction, whereby is sullied the spiritual motive of serving God in the person of His images, which is indeed the very soul of this virtue. For the benefit of the poor he was induced to write that book which has been frequently through the press, "On the Case of the Rich," desiring that all who were blessed with wealth might become the protectors of the poor, according to the wise dispensation of Providence, which willed that there should be in this world both rich and poor; the rich, that they might gain Paradise by their merit in assisting the poor; and the poor, that they might gain it by their patience in serving their richer brethren. And he had this maxim so firmly fixed in his mind, that, meeting in the street some illustrious personage, instead of stopping to admire the rich livery and gilded coaches, as worldly men do, he would remark to his companion: "Do you think that this man can be saved without sharing some part of his wealth with the poor?"

He relieved the wants of the poor, however, not merely with his pen, but still more by active labour, procuring for them opportune succour from

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the resources offered to him by the liberality of the rich, who thought they could not better dispose of their alms to the needy than by entrusting them to the care of Father Peter. He had a list of many poor families, to whom he regularly administered money, clothing, and linen, and every other article that they might stand in need of. And he took the greatest pleasure in relieving those who had been formerly in affluent or respectable circumstances, but now by a sad reverse of fortune were brought to the most extreme necessity, and were hindered by a feeling of shame from presenting themselves as beggars for a bare subsistence. We know not the amount of these alms registered to the credit of Father Pinamonti in the book of God; but this we know, that in Modena, where he dwelled the longest, he was called the father of the poor. One day as he was walking through the city, he was approached by a man, who with the most profound submission kissed his hand. Being asked by his companion who this man was, he replied, "He is a Jew, who has received many thousands of scudi for clothes and linen for the service of the poor." From this we may calculate in general to what a sum would amount the alms which the Father distributed, not in Modena alone, but in Rome and Florence likewise: for his charity was like the sun, diffusing wherever it goes the beneficent rays of its light. It was truly edifying to see how he united in his person the extreme of voluntary poverty with that of more than voluntary liberality; so that he had nothing for himself, yet, while he was

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a pattern of poverty in everything, dress, furniture, and all necessaries, he had abundance of riches to confer upon the poor.

His charity, by which he devoted himself to the sick in private houses and in the public hospitals, was yet more estimable than his unbounded alms; because in bestowing alms he spent the goods of others, whereas in attending upon the sick he was giving away himself and his very life. His daily sallies from the house after dinner had no other end in view than either to procure succour for poor families, or serve and console the sick. There was at Florence a poor creature afflicted with a tedious and painful disease, and left in a wretched cottage, deprived of all human comfort. For several months the charity of Father Pinamonti conducted him almost every day to console her in soul, and support her in body. He discharged this office of attending and comforting the sick with such unction and amiable affection as seemed to be something more than human.

It was his regular custom in the noviciate at Rome, to go every day to the hospital of S. John Lateran, to serve the sick, who were always to be found there in great numbers. These excursions were the recreations and the relief he gave to his feeble head, which in the morning had been kept so long under exertion. Nor could any sort of weather detain him from them, neither cold, rain, nor winds; for he found himself well protected by the fervour of his charity. One day in winter, when the north wind was blowing an excessively cold blast, turning to his companion, he uttered

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these words rather from his heart than his lips, "Well would it be for you and for me, if the wind were to cause us to return home under an attack of pleurisy, which would put an end to our lives in this glorious act of serving Christ in the persons of his poor sick members." In fact, he was partly heard, for by his constantly attending the hospital in the most severe weather, he contracted in the year 94 a mortal sickness, which brought him to the verge of death. And if he did not die from his charity in serving the sick, it was, I think, because the Lord was pleased that he should sacrifice his life with more glory and merit in the service of souls, pursuing his beloved missions. As soon as ever he recovered from this attack, he returned without delay to assist the sick in the hospital with redoubled activity and ardour; persuaded that God had prolonged his life no otherwise than by a miracle, that he might spend it totally for the advantage of the sick.

It would be impossible to describe adequately the diligence and love with which he caressed and consoled these wretched beings. Whatever presents came to his hands, were all set aside for his poor sick patients. There was no creature in that large hospital, however revolting his condition might be, to whom the good father did not, with his own hands, extend every kind of assistance. The most hideous and disgusting were served with the greatest readiness and delight. He fed the weaker ones, dressed the sores of the most afflicted, and consoled all with a tenderness greater than that of a mother. The sick knew no wants which they

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did not get quickly satisfied by the charity of Father Peter, who, like another Job, became as hands, and feet, and eyes, to all who needed assistance. Not content with making their beds, and purifying their persons from all uncleanness, he was ingenious in serving them as a barber, and tailor, cutting their hair and shaving and combing them, pairing their nails, and mending their clothes and mattresses; and for these ends, he carried about with him needles and thread, with scissors and combs, and everything useful for the convenience of the sick. All this he did with a holy ambition, esteeming himself honoured in thus ministering to Christ's poor, and his countenance was seen to glow with delight, as of a person who is intent upon some work for his own special good. Hence the sick were filled with admiration, and the assistants with edification, at such heroic charity.

His visits to the hospital were not less favourable to the souls than the bodies of the patients: at the very time he was occupied in relieving their corporal wants, he would treat with them on their spiritual necessities, exhorting them to accept the pains of the body for the good of the soul, and to pay the debts contracted by their sins by the merit of patience. These holy discourses came from the lips of the father, accompanied by such an amiable sweetness that they contributed to the hearts of his hearers equal profit and delight. Father Pinamonti did not, however, confine this attention to the interior of the hospital; every place was a noble theatre for his charity. He procured

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many kinds of medicines and various recipes, to cure the poor without expense or inconvenience to their families. Among the remedies which he afforded, was one for the cure of the itch, and he always carried about with him small packages, to give to such of the poor as were afflicted with this disease, imposing upon each to approach the holy communion as soon as he was cured. In fine, all the exertions and all the thoughts of this man were employed in discovering means of serving and aiding the poor. Even brute beasts enjoyed the effects of his charitable heart, as he took particular care to provide for the dogs and cats, in recompense for the services they rendered to the Community. In the Noviciate at Florence, he every day after dinner, made a point of conveying something to eat, and loosing the chain for the dog which kept watch at the garden.

He who had such grateful feelings towards animals, could not but be still more grateful towards men, in returning the greatest possible recompense for any sort of kindness that was bestowed upon him. The least courtesy that he received was enough to gain his heart; he studied to make a return by recollecting the benefit, and likewise by some corresponding act of gratitude. And when, through poverty, he was unable to afford an equal return, he bestowed in token of his eternal obligations, at least one of his little works, always having a special remembrance of his benefactors in his prayers and the holy sacrifice.

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CHAPTER XX.

HIS HUMILITY.

CHARITY and humility were the two guides which conducted Father Pinamonti in all the paths of his life. However, it appears that humility was his peculiar choice, and his true characteristic. This was the darling virtue of his heart, this the foundation on which he raised the edifice of religious perfection; and, in fine, this constituted the essence of all his virtuous actions, inasmuch as there always shone forth in them some ray of humility. He was humble in his carriage and in his words; humble in his actions and conversations, and above all, most humble in the opinion and contempt he had for himself. All his thoughts, and all the affections of his soul, were imbued with this spirit of extraordinary humility. He was by many called the original of that golden work, entitled, "The mirror which never deceives," because in the composition of it, he had done nothing else than give a faithful description of himself; all his actions being framed by the rule of humility which he prescribes in that work.

It is not easy to conceive how ingenious he was in concealing the endowments of nature and of grace, that he might escape every species of applause on account of his talents and virtue; and consequently his sanctity would have ap-

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peared more clearly to the eyes of others, had it not been so artfully hidden by his wonderful humility. Whatever he did through motives of virtue, he concealed under some other name, not attributing to it a virtuous motive. On his journeys, when he used to leave the beaten track, and walk among the thorns and briars that wounded his feet and covered them with blood, he would say he did so to gratify himself in seeking for odoriferous and medicinal herbs; his total abstinence from wine and taking nothing but water to drink when he was past seventy years of age, was, as he said, the best remedy for his maladies; his going out in the most stormy weather in winter to serve the sick in the hospital, was an excellent means of relieving the pains in his head; as to all the food and other presents which he sought out for his sick, he pretended that they were for his own nourishment. He would never be dispensed from observing the fast of Lent, though it was so very injurious to his poor head, saying that meagre food, and such as was the least substantial, were better adapted to his constitution; every morning he adjusted the clothes on his bed, as if he had taken an agreeable repose during the night, whereas he had slept in a small chair or lying on the bare floor. In a similar way he was most industrious in hiding his acts of mortification, and all his other virtuous practices. And whilst too many cover under the false title of virtue the inclinations of their self-love, Father Peter on the contrary attributed all his heroic acts of true virtue

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to the workings of self-love. A person who was well acquainted with this his spirit of humility, used to say of him in a playful manner, that Father Pinamonti was a great wanderer and deceiver, because he spent the greatest part of the year in going about from one place to another, and was too well skilled in the art of passing for what he really was not.

He concealed his merits and virtues with such care that their concealment escaped notice, and he appeared rather not to possess them than to hide them; all which he did in order to avoid being esteemed humble, and to meet with the mortification of being looked upon as mean and contemptible. And he so far excelled in this art, that a learned father used to remark, that it was necessary to be on one's guard against him who puts forth mirrors that do not deceive, because he himself was the greatest deceiver of all.

From this spirit of true humility arose in Father Peter that deep-rooted abhorrence which on all occasions he evinced for praises bestowed upon him, either on account of his writings or his many virtuous actions. And whereas in meeting with an injury or an affront, he was quite insensible to the wrong, in hearing himself praised, on the other hand, he felt a displeasure which he could not dissemble, and he endeavoured to hide it, either by changing the discourse or observing a strict silence. There was one of our fathers in Rome, who, knowing the great aversion which he had for applause, wished to make a

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trial of it in the presence of others, by reading publicly at recreation the letter written to the father-general by the Republic of Genoa, in gratitude for the missions which Fathers Segneri and Pinamonti had been preaching in that state, and where, among other things, there was a particular eulogium of the latter. Whilst he read the letter he every now and then fixed his eyes upon Father Pinamonti, in order to attract the attention of all to the disgust which he would evince at hearing his own praise. But the father, no less sagacious than humble, detected the stratagem, and by a modest smile contrived to conceal his annoyance, and by a total silence, to hide his humility itself.

His aversion for applause, and for everything which could in the least degree procure commendation and esteem, arose not only from his intense desire to live unknown and neglected, but also still more from the lowly opinion he entertained of himself and everything belonging to him, whereby he considered himself deserving of contempt rather than praise. He looked upon himself as so entirely destitute of all good, that there was no one to whom he did not think himself inferior, entertaining so much the higher opinion of others as he despised himself. Every other person he looked upon as his superior whom he was bound to serve, and he never allowed any opportunity to pass of exercising this humble act of servitude. It was from this most humble esteem of himself that arose his constant repugnance to all manner of superiority, thinking it an unheard-of mistake

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that he, who was the lowest of all, should be put over the rest, and that he should be set to rule a whole community, who could not even direct himself. It is certain that in the government of his own soul, he thought himself in as great need of direction as the youngest and most inexperienced novice.

It is a very laudable practice of the wisest men, who have little trust in their own judgment, to regulate the affairs of their souls according to the advice of others, that they may not wander from the right path. But I am of opinion, there could not be found a man who was so experienced in the conduct of souls, and at the same time thought he stood so much in need of direction and advice, as Father Peter. His skill in the discernment of spirits was such, that when Father Paul Segneri was appointed by the sacred inquisition at Rome to examine that of a famous nun, who, deceived by the devil transformed into an angel of light, was imposing on her companions by the most extraordinary signs, he thought he could not proceed better or with greater caution in this difficult business, than by entrusting it to the prudence of Father Peter. Having, therefore, made the necessary examinations, he immediately discovered the deceptions of the nun, who was thus miserably infatuated by the infernal enemy; and he brought the whole clearly to light in a learned account of it in writing, the original of which is still preserved.

Experienced as was Father Pinamonti in the art of discerning spirits, and of regulating the con-

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sciences of others, yet he thought that he himself stood in greater need than any other of submitting himself to the censure of his director, and of following a prescribed rule for the conduct of his interior. But what was the most singular in this humble man was, his manner of rendering an account of his conscience to his spiritual father. As his humility could discover nothing, either within his interior or without, which, to the enlightened eyes of his pure mind, did not appear defective and reproachful, his disclosure of his conscience was, in fact, nothing but a perpetual accusing himself of his defects, and burying himself in the lowest depths of his own self-abasement; endeavouring to procure for himself the character of being a man filled with imperfections, and destitute of virtue. Hence his spiritual father in the noviciate at Rome, having repeatedly admired his humility in accusing himself, one day said to him, "My dear Father Peter, if you come to tell me these things for your own consolation and comfort, it is well, continue to come, and I will willingly hear you. But if you tell me them that I may form a bad opinion of you, I assure you, you will not succeed."

This method of unfolding his conscience, which he adopted at Rome, he also followed out in other places. In 1701, that is, two years before his death, he went through the spiritual exercises in the noviciate of Bologna. On this occasion he wished to lay open his interior to the father-rector, and master of the novices in that house, in order to receive direction in the affairs of his

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soul; and with what humility and simplicity he gave an account of himself, we may learn from the pen of the rector himself who heard him. He writes thus from Bologna: "Father Peter having come to our noviciate in the year 1701, wished to go through the spiritual exercises, and give an account of his soul to me. I was much struck with this, because, from his great age, and still more from the consummate knowledge and experience in spiritual things, which, as everybody knows, he possesses, he might well be my master and director. Yet was I more astonished with the nature of the account which he gave of himself to me. Both in explaining himself, and in afterwards asking for light and direction, he displayed the simplicity of a child. With this simplicity, however, I saw clearly united a wonderful and holy artfulness of the most sublime humility. By this he studied (yet without prejudice to truth) to make me esteem him a man of no consideration, yea, even to be despised in all he did. And all this with such readiness and fluency, that I cannot express it, except in the words of S. John Climacus, which appear written for this purpose expressly. "Crescente vero in anima per ætatem spiritualem ista regina virtutum humilitate, omnia bona facta a nobis reputamus nihil, immo abominationem."

"I observed Father Pinamonti to be exactly conformable to this description, filled with a most abject opinion of himself, from the abundance of which he spoke against himself with so much success, and accused himself as guilty in every

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occurrence without exception, whether of his religious life, or in the missions. Of all these particulars he spoke to me minutely; but always in the same strain, disclosing to me the sting of his supposed failings. And yet, whilst accusing himself of his faults, he displayed traits of the most sublime virtue, which were not only new to me, but which I think are not to be found, except in the saints. I cannot enumerate the generous expressions he made use of, nor describe the delight of his countenance, and other signs by which, without meaning it, he pourtrayed noble virtues. He seemed to me to be wholly occupied in a matter of the greatest comfort to himself, viz., to leave in my mind a vile and contemptible opinion of himself. The result, however, was far different: I was filled with astonishment at such humility, and at the heavenly lights with which his soul was favoured. For several days after, I could think of nothing else, and I felt this interior joy, that I had for once heard a real saint. Even to this day, as often as I call to my mind his conversation, I feel sentiments of compunction, and am actually moved to tenderness and tears." Thus wrote this religious. Now from the conduct of Father Pinamonti, in endeavouring to debase himself before his spiritual directors, we may easily infer how zealously he would strive to conceal his virtues, and humble himself before all others.

The depths of his humility may be better understood from the industry with which he studied to conceal even the gifts of talent and knowledge,

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with which he was so richly furnished. The endowments of nature are, without doubt, inferior to the gifts of grace and virtue; but because they adorn the superior part of man in a sensible manner, they are generally most of all admired by the weakness of our minds, and too often serve to nourish our pride. Father Peter, on the contrary, knew how to avail himself of his talents and learning to acquire additional humility. After that generous renouncement which he made in the beginning of all professorships and studies, he gave himself up entirely to the pursuit of humility, endeavouring to gain the character of an ignorant fellow, without talents or any learning whatever. Nor did he ever allow himself to be deceived by that specious mistake into which many fall, of being able, by holding the reputation of a scientific man, to promote more effectively the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.

By the eminence of his talents, he not only took the lead in the philosophical course, but he acquired such skill in speculative and moral theology, as well as in the physical and experimental sciences, that a very learned father oftentimes remarked, that he had never learned more from any one, than he had done by familiar conversation with Father Pinamonti, who possessed a peculiar facility of expressing in a very few words the scope of the subject. In the familiar exhortations, which he had to make through obedience, he was listened to by all with admiration and delight. He could never be prevailed upon to preach in public, excusing himself by

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pleading a want of strength, but, in fact, his reason was, that he might not lose the character of being an ignorant man; a title more dear to his humility than are the most pompous and exalted to human ambition. He contrived by means of great exertion, that those works which in the beginning were printed without his name, should not be considered as his productions, and he would have continued to publish all his succeeding works in like manner, had it not been otherwise ordained. Some of these books, printed without his name, were soon translated into various languages, bearing the name of Father Segneri. And the humble Father Pinamonti rejoiced exceedingly to see the labours of his own studies acknowledged as those of another; and he thought that by this means he should be able to labour for others without any detriment to his humility. Another rare example of his humility was his labouring for so many years in collecting materials for the works of Father Segneri; for such are rarely to be met with as are willing to bear the fatigue of labours without partaking in the glory that ensues.

Above all, the humility of the servant of God was pre-eminently displayed in his submitting every one of his compositions to the censure of one who was in fact far his inferior in knowledge. The human intellect does not easily submit to masters, and in nothing does it wish to appear less deficient than in judgment and knowledge. And yet Father Peter, whose mind was so exalted, arrived at such a degree of humility, as to con-

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ceive that in all his compositions he stood in need of direction from others, and sought it from all, whoever they might be.

At Florence he was just on the point of committing one of his compositions to print, when a confidential friend of his, who had seen it, made an objection to some part. Scarcely had the Father heard his objection, than without saying a word, he changed more than once a whole chapter of the work, according to the taste of the censor. And he did this, not simply to accommodate himself to the sentiments of others, but to acquire a total subjection of his intellect; taking the judgment of others as the rule for his own.

One of the fathers of the noviciate in Rome saw a manuscript copy of certain meditations written by Father Pinamonti, on the Spiritual Exercises of S. Ignatius, and they were so well composed, and so appropriate for persons, both religious and secular, that he thought it would be rendering a service to God to exhort him to publish an entire volume of meditations on the Exercises. But to induce him to undertake this task was to offer great violence to his humility. Finally, however, after a lengthened opposition, he consented to the proposition, but on this express condition, that He who had encouraged him to it would be his director of the work. His friend readily accepted the proposal, knowing that otherwise he could never have attained his object. It was truly edifying to see the humility with which the good father, night after night, submitted to his judgment the fruit of that day's

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composition, as if he had been a simple scholar, whereas he was well calculated to serve as his master. Meanwhile his friend did not fail to point out to him many objections, which he invariably attended to, correcting, changing, and adding just as he received suggestions, with a docility and submission of his understanding which was altogether astounding.

Father Paul Segneri happily finished his days in the noviciate at Rome in 1694, attended to his last breath with the most assiduous attention by Father Pinamonti, who almost immediately after his death wished to publish a lengthened account of the heroic virtues of Father Paul. But before he came to a definite conclusion, he submitted the design to his friend the father above mentioned, who thought that for many reasons it would not be prudent to make public so soon after his death many things recorded there of Father Paul, though highly commendable in themselves. At this opposition Father Pinamonti felt himself strongly moved by opposite thoughts and feelings; for, on the one hand, his humility urged him to submit his own judgment to the opinion of others; whilst, on the other hand, his love and esteem for Father Segneri would not easily consent to lay aside what he thought would redound so much to the glory of the deceased. For some time he remained fluctuating between these two motives, but at length his humility triumphed, and he exclaimed, with his countenance all excited by the interior struggle, "I wish it to be prepared exactly according to your

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judgment, father;" and he set himself to work, correcting and curtailing as he received suggestions. This docility and submission of the understanding in a man of such eminent talents and acquirements, appears to me a miracle of humility, not easily to be found even in persons of the most consummate virtue.

CHAPTER XXI.

HIS PERFECTION.

The virtue of humility was peculiarly the path by which Father Peter advanced to the height of perfection. There is nothing which so soon dries up the channel of Divine beneficence as arrogance and pride; so there is nothing which causes the gifts of heaven to flow more abundantly upon us than an humble opinion of ourselves. It is no wonder, then, that Father Peter, having studied so zealously to humble himself, should be plentifully enriched by the hand of God with those exalted gifts which are bestowed on none but humble hearts.

Having divested himself of all sentiments of self-esteem, it was more easy for him to throw aside all attachment to sensible objects, and transform himself entirely into God; in which consists true perfection. All those visible things which, viewed in the light of the world, so powerfully allure our hearts to love and seek them, when considered in the light of eternity, appeared to Father

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Pinamonti as merely a false appearance and a painted scene. He lived so separated from these worldly enjoyments, that he appeared to be dead to all sensible things. And as each of our senses receive no impressions but from its proper object, and the hearing is not affected by colour or smell, but merely by sound, which is the object set apart for it; so did the heart and mind of Father Peter seem to receive no impression from present objects, but only from God and the truths of eternity. He had no concern at all for honours and contempt, health or sickness, life or death. No thoughts ever passed through his mind, no desires entered his heart, and no discourses escaped his lips, that did not concern the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

He was three different times attacked by grievous sickness, and on all occasions he made the solidity of his virtue shine forth more resplendently than ever. In 1684 he was visited by a most painful illness, whilst going through the laborious duties of the missions in Piacentino. One who attended him day and night, testifies that he was astonished to see the resignation and invincible patience with which he endured that cruel martyrdom, never allowing a groan to escape him, nor uttering a syllable of complaint, nor even raising a sigh for the relief of afflicted nature, which, from his changing colour in his countenance, showed how grievously he was suffering. The second time that he was ill, was of a dangerous detention of the urine in Florence, where Father Segneri happened also to be staying at the

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same time. It was pleasing to see on this occasion the different sentiments which this mortal illness caused in the two friends. Father Paul, overwhelmed with grief, did nothing but weep, through fear of losing such a dear companion, sighing as he went about the house: "Where shall I find another companion equal to Father Peter, who, during so many years, has done nothing, nor uttered a word, which could be construed into the slightest fault." On the contrary, Father Peter, in the greatest danger, and when enduring the most violent pains, remained with a heavenly peace and joy; like to those lofty mountains, which feel the violence of the storms on their flanks, but at the summit enjoy serenity and calmness. The greatest pain he endured was the sight of his friend in such affliction, whom he consoled by trust in the divine Providence. His third sickness happened whilst he was in the Noviciate at Rome, which was brought on, as I have said, by his continuing to go in the most inclement weather to the hospital of S. John. The danger increased so far, that it was thought prudent to administer to him the last sacraments of the church. The more noble the occasion of his malady, the more eminently did he show forth his virtue, in confronting that last passage from life to death, with an imperturbable calmness of mind and tranquillity of soul. No sooner was his danger announced to him, than he demanded with the utmost importunity the holy sacraments, and received them with such devotion and cheerfulness, that one of the fathers, after observing for a length

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of time his vivacity and joy in that time of danger, turning to one of his companions in astonishment, exclaimed: "See, this man receives the Viaticum as if he were setting out on the missions, and not passing to the other world." The divine Goodness vouchsafed to hear the many prayers and supplications that were made for the recovery of the dying man, by withdrawing him from the jaws of death, and prolonging his life. And Father Peter, without any apprehension, immediately resumed his visits to the hospital, and his journeys on the missions.

This eminent virtue of Father Pinamonti was discovered by Father Segneri the first time he had him for his companion in the missions of Lucca. Hence, in writing to the general, he says that he was full of God; and on another occasion he adds: "I can assure you, father, that he is a holy man, and that for twenty-three years that we have been together, I have never observed in him any fault, though he has remarked very many in my conduct." And this opinion of his sanctity, which he often expressed by letters to the general, he confirmed by word of mouth, breaking out repeatedly into rapturous eulogies on the virtues of Father Pinamonti. He used to say that the more minutely he watched the conduct of Father Peter, the more firmly was he convinced that in all his actions he followed the most perfect course. Had Father Segneri survived but for a short time Father Pinamonti, I have no doubt that he would have disclosed many noble acts of virtue, which the humility of the holy man concealed, in the

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same manner as we have received from the relation of Father Pinamonti our knowledge of the most illustrious actions of Father Segneri.

The virtues of Father Segneri have sometimes been the subject of conversation in different companies, some praising one and some another; and they would then pass perhaps to a comparison between him and Father Peter. It has been observed that on these occasions, and especially at Modena, whilst by every one Father Segneri was extolled as a most holy man, they were yet unanimous in the opinion, that Father Pinamonti possessed a certain, I know not what, so amiable, that it allured all hearts to a veneration of his virtues. And if I might be here permitted to assert what I think, I should say that they were both men of the highest perfection; but Father Segneri distinguished himself by subjecting and punishing his body; Father Pinamonti by a total contempt for himself and all that he had; Father Segneri availed himself of the strength of his constitution, to aid the fervour of his spirit; Father Pinamonti strengthened his feeble body by his fervour: Father Segneri, by the brilliancy of his talents, secured to himself the esteem and veneration of the people; Father Pinamonti, by his mildness and humility, gained the love and hearts of all. But let us return to our narration.

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CHAPTER XXII.

OF THE FRUITS OF HIS LAST MISSION.

The report of the abundant harvest reaped by Father Pinamonti in the missions which he preached the year before in the Valtellina and Chiavenna, induced his serene highness the Grand Duke to invite him to come and give a mission in Leghorn and the neighbouring parts, previous to his starting for the diocese of Novara, where he was engaged the next year, which happened to be the last of his life. The humble father was not a little confused with this invitation, thinking himself utterly incompetent for the task, according to the opinion he invariably entertained of himself, as possessing no ability, either natural or divine. But the invitation, coming as it did from a personage who had deserved so well of the missions, had, on that account, more weight with him than a command. More than ever did he recommend, and cause others to recommend the happy issue of this good work to the Lord, who tenders His assistance the most bountifully to such as have the greatest diffidence in themselves and the most unbounded confidence in Him. Before, however, he had received this invitation to Leghorn, he felt in his heart a secret call to his mission to the other world. It was now a year since he had first felt some presentiment of his approaching death, in as much as

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he saw himself favoured with a more special gift of prayer, and a more intimate communication with God, whereby his soul was elevated to spiritual things, and he led a life entirely wearied with this earth, and enamoured of heaven.

As a preparation for this passage to eternity, he wished before he set out for Leghorn to make an exact general confession of his whole life; for it is a property of the most perfect men, after having been for many years purified by a most saintly life, to find still something in themselves to rectify and cleanse. The father who heard this his confession, was filled with admiration at the union of such innocence and contrite repentance. From the signs of grief which he exhibited in making his confession, he might be taken for one of the most abandoned of men, who had but just lately begun to repent and amend his life. On the contrary, to judge from the weight and quality of the faults of which he accused himself, it would seem that he was yet clothed with the whole robe of baptismal innocence. After this so excellent a preparation, the thoughts of death never left his mind, and he frequently conversed with his companions on the subject, who concluded from his language that he must have had some light from above, warning him of his approaching end.

In the mission of Leghorn he laboured with the most intense fervour and abundant profit of souls. Of any extraordinary events we have not been favoured with a relation. We know, however, that he introduced, by common consent, a regu-

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lation regarding the dress of the ladies, which had hitherto been extravagant and unbecoming; and entertained the most sanguine hopes of a happy result, had not one of the principal ladies set herself to oppose the design with the most determined obstinacy. Father Pinamonti was in her house, discoursing on the means of facilitating the plan with several discreet and zealous persons, when the lady, without giving ear to the reasons proposed, or considering the common advantage, planted herself before the father, and in a stately manner thus addressed him: "You have, father, it is true, a pleasing address, but I have three coloured dresses, which cost me a good round sum of money, and which I am desirous to enjoy. Moreover, I cannot be purchasing fresh ones every day." To this impudent speech, Father Peter, inflamed with zeal, replied, "You wish, then, for the sake of your dresses to ruin this most holy project? Perhaps God will not fail in procuring means to prevent you from enjoying your fine clothes, and make you repent of having hindered this great good!" "Well," replied the lady, "God can do all things, but I intend to wear my dresses as long as I am able;" and with this the project fell to the ground. She, however, who had been the cause of this, did not escape without punishment; for in less than a year the lady became a widow, and saw the fine garments publicly sold before her eyes, for which she had dared to frustrate so salutary a work.

It is proper that I should here relate what happened to him in his return from the mission of

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Porto Ferrajo. He arrived at the port of Leghorn at an hour in the evening when he was not permitted to enter the city: and the father, who gladly embraced every opportunity of mortifying himself, was willing to remain during the whole night until open day, occupied in prayer on a galley, without sleep, or ever taking a mouthful of bread, which was procured for him by the charity of his companion. What is, however, more remarkable about the mission of Leghorn is, that it was then he began to feel that indisposition which, in the end, deprived him of life. He had become accustomed to be totally unconcerned about either heat or cold, rain or wind, labouring in all kinds of weather, without the least regard to either his health or life. With the same generosity did he continue his exertions on this occasion, although he was now much reduced in strength, and beyond seventy years of age. One day, as he was delivering a catechetical instruction in the open country, a most piercing wind arose, and from this, it was believed, his mortal illness took its rise.

This fresh indisposition was unable to cool his zeal, or prevent him from sailing to Genoa, on his way to the missions of Novara. When the news of the arrival of Father Peter became known in Genoa, it was hailed with delight by those pious ladies, who were anxious to engage him to give them the spiritual exercises, which they were accustomed to go through every year in some remote church for the space of eight days. A party of the most zealous of these, attended

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by a number of gentlemen, presented themselves at the professed house, and besought the father to allow them to enjoy, during their exercises, some portion of that zeal by means of which he went about sanctifying the faithful of so many dioceses. At this unexpected request Father Peter was seized with the greatest confusion possible, and struggling to excuse himself by reasons suggested by his humility, answered them, that he was astonished at being esteemed skilful in the ministry, he who, on account of his deficiency of knowledge, had not been promoted by his superiors to the profession of the fourth vow, and who merely possessed sufficient to give a few simple instructions to the common country people, and nothing else. He begged of them then not to make such a great mistake, as to take him for something, which he really was not. This reply, by which he sought to bring contempt on himself, was so far from gaining the desired end, that on the contrary it tended strongly to increase the veneration which those ladies already had for him, who were no less sagacious than pious. Accordingly, being more anxious than ever to put themselves under his direction, they made a very earnest application to our superiors to obtain their request. Meanwhile their common desire reached the ears of the senate, who apprehending that on account of the high reputation of the father, there would be gathered such a crowd as might prove dangerous to the welfare of the state, and give rise to one of those tumults so justly feared and prudently avoided in all free

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cities, immediately issued a request to the superior of the house, that he would cause Father Pinamonti to depart as soon as possible. He preferring to bestow his exertion in behalf of the poor with success, rather than display his talents to ladies with applause, willingly pursued his voyage to Novara, there to terminate by a holy death his apostolic ministry.

The weakness caused by the fresh attack of the sickness with which he had been visited in Leghorn, by no means relaxed his accustomed fervour in the service of his neighbour. On the contrary, his zeal, like a flame approaching its own element, seemed to make a last noble exertion in the missions which he gave in Alegio, Brescia, Vorio, Guzzano, Bargomancia, and finally Orta, which was destined by God as the place of repose from his glorious labours. During the whole of this time he continued in constant expectation of death. And in all the instructions which he gave, he ceased not to exhort his audience to pray for him, as he had but a short time remaining now to live; showing clearly that he possessed a certain knowledge of his approaching passage.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

THE LAST ILLNESS AND DEATH OF THE HOLY MAN.

ORTA is a village on the banks of the Lago Maggiore, about a day's journey distant from the city of Novara. In this village the functions of the mission were commenced on a hill, called the hill of S. Francis, there being chapels about it erected in memory of miracles wrought by the intercession of that saint. For two days Father Peter mounted this hill to hear confessions and catechize; but on the second, which was the 20th of June, he was seized with such a total abandonment of strength, that he could no longer conceal it, and calling in a priest who was assisting him in hearing confessions, he said to him: "Signor D. Giovanni, I feel myself unwell; let all go to dinner, as I stand in need of some repose, and I pray you not to mention my sickness to him who has to preach to-day, that the regular duties may not be interrupted.

His illness was then thought to be nothing more than excessive fatigue, as he had passed several nights without sleep; and he was desired to retire to his room, and dispense for that day with his usual catechism. When one short hour was passed, behold Father Peter again issues from his room, resolutely determined to give his instruction, or to speak more truly, to sacrifice his life to God in that last act. Scarcely had he advanced a few steps, than, feeling himself unable to stand

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erect, he was obliged to ascend the hill supported on the arms of others. At the sight of Father Pinamonti thus conducted to church, who had always been seen to walk with naked feet, a still more numerous crowd assembled, attracted partly by the wonder of this heroic action, and partly by their apprehensions about his health. Having mounted his platform, the countenance of the father was like that of a corpse ; and every one thought that he had come to deposit with them his last will, and take leave of them for the next world. All listened with the deepest attention, and with their eyes fixed on the father, who commenced his instruction in a languid and feeble voice. But after giving utterance to a few sentences, he was suddenly invested with such vigour of mind, that he was enabled to prolong his instruction for a very long time in a strong voice and with great emotion. This excited the astonishment of his auditors, who every now and then looked at one another, buried in wonder. Still more were his companions astonished, who knew how much his strength was exhausted, from having taken no nourishment, his want of sleep for many nights, and, above all, the sickness which had come upon him that day: whence they concluded that this vigorous exhortation was either an effect of supernatural virtue, or a last exertion of charity.

On returning to his abode, he was obliged to take to his bed, and commit himself to the care of the physician, who, from the beating of his pulse, and other symptons, declared his case to be dangerous in the highest degree. But before the

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physician made this announcement, he himself had felt that he had reached the desired close of his days. As a preparation for his last passage, he immediately demanded his crucifix, and his little work on the preparation for death, and would have with him a small portrait which he possessed of Father Paul Segneri, trusting, that as he had served him so faithfully, both during his life and at his death, he would now reward him by blessing him with his particular assistance from heaven at this time of the greatest need.

When the news of the dangerous sickness of the father was spread through those parts, all were deeply affected and grieved as if in him alone they all dreaded the loss of their own father. Six of the most eminent physicians hastened to his assistance, knowing well that they could not better display the skill of their art, than in prolonging the life of a man so deservedly beloved by all. For three days they remained in a state of doubt, between hopes and fears. On the morning of the fourth, however, it was announced that his malady was pleurisy, joined with inflammation, which took away every shade of hope. During all this time he endured the most grievous pains with an invincible fortitude, resigned himself perfectly to the divine will, and abandoned himself totally and without reserve into the loving arms of his Lord. He received the announcement of his death with a serenity of countenance and interior joy, as of something which he had long foreseen, and ardently desired. In making his confession, he begged of his confessor to impose upon him as a penance,

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to offer to God the sacrifice of his life and of his death, to render it the more precious by that act. He prepared himself for the holy sacraments with expressions of such tender affection, and such fervent acts of piety as drew tears from all who were present.

Having received the holy Eucharist and Extreme Unction, he survived an entire day and night, his countenance remaining always serene, his heart absorbed in God, and his mind quite unimpaired even to his last breath. He occupied himself continually in holy affections and sentiments, and caused at intervals some book of devotion to be read, or some Psalm recited, when he would frequently break out into heroic acts of the theological virtues. He also made use of that book of his, on the preparation for death, which has been of such immense service to many in their dying moments, thereby verifying those words of the prophet: Fructum adinventionum suarum comedet. When the people became aware that he had but a few moments now to live, they made the most earnest entreaties to be admitted into the presence of the dying saint. But his companions, apprehensive that such a concourse would be of considerable injury to him, withheld the crowd, until the father, hearing of their pious desire, gave orders for the door to be thrown open, and all the people allowed to enter; for his affectionate heart could not bear to dismiss his devout children discontented in this last parting. The crowd entering and going out from his room, poured in a continual stream; the father received all courteously,

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consoled them sweetly, and blessed them all in the most tender manner, every now and then raising his arm, without showing any signs of weariness or annoyance. Every one left the room, consoled at seeing him so tranquil and serene, but equally afflicted for the loss of a man who was universally held to be a saint and an apostle. Each related some of his virtues; one the fatigues of so many pilgrimages made with naked feet, another the wonderful conversions of the most abandoned sinners, and other acts of the most exemplary charity and meekness.

The veneration of the people was increased to a still greater height by the fame of a single fact which was thus made known. The night before the happy death of the father, there were some persons in the church preparing for the general communion which was to be given next morning, and all on a sudden they seemed to behold through a window the room of the dying man, shining most brilliantly, and the whole adjoining corridor lit up with a most extraordinary splendour. Surprised at this novel appearance, they hastened to the chamber of the father, and on arriving found nothing but the good old man, who in the midst of his extreme pains, was devoutly accompanying with acts of tender piety the psalms which his attendant for that night was repeating. If this were a true sign, and a real light from heaven, which it is not for me to decide, every one may imagine the beautiful light with which that blessed soul is enriched, which God was thus pleased to glorify in the

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last hours of his life, and after his death by still more manifest signs.

During the whole of the night, which was for him a happy vigil of paradise, he gave place to no thoughts but those of God and of heaven. But he could not even then forget his charity nor his dearly beloved missions. More than twenty times he pressed in the warmest terms the father who was attending him to go and take some repose, for he could not endure that any one on his account should remain watching the whole night. He then protested that he died perfectly content, because he died as a missioner, and earnestly recommended his companions to continue the missions in the form practised by Father Segneri, and observed up to that time; knowing from thirty-eight years' experience, what incalculable advantages are derived to souls by that method. One of these he enjoined to entreat the Grand Duke, in his name, to continue to favour the missions with his protection, as he had hitherto done; assuring him that he would not cease to pray God to reward him for all the kindness derived from his liberal piety, when he should be made worthy to enter into the glory of the just.

Meanwhile it was suggested to him that it was the opinion of some eminent authors, that the holy communion could in certain cases be repeated by way of viaticum. This announcement filled him with joy; but he was anxious to examine in person the grounds of this opinion in the works of Bonacina, being as yet perfectly

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master of the faculties of his mind. Satisfied with the reasons, he spent about an hour in quiet and union with God, as a preparation for the holy communion, which he received on the morning of the last day he saw in this world, thus dying, "In osculo Domini." After he had been refreshed with this divine food, he caused to be recited the prayers prescribed by the Church for the comfort of the dying, together with some psalms, to which he had a particular devotion. He was now asked by his companion to hear his confession, so as to adminster even at the point of death, that Sacrament, which, during so many years of his life, he had attended to with such delight. No request could have been more consoling to the servant of God; and, accordingly, all inflamed with joy, he set about to hear the confession of his companion, and having given him absolution, not like a dying man in bed, but as one in full health in the confessional, he would recite all the prayers which are accustomed to be used in the sacrament. These are the last words Father Peter uttered; and the conclusion of his prayers, and his losing the power of speech were simultaneous. Thus, as his last public act had been to give catechism, so the last words he pronounced were in administering the sacrament of penance; our blessed Lord showing by this, how dear to him were the labours incessantly pursued by Father Peter, in exercising these two branches of the holy ministry for the good of his neighbour.

Father Pinamonti went to receive the re-

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ward of his virtues in the midst of the tears and prayers of his friends, without any sign or movement which indicated a man in his agony, on the morning of the 25th of June, in the year 1703. He was seventy-one years old, fifteen of which he had passed in the greatest innocence in the world, and fifty-six in a holy religious life, and thirty-eight in the apostolic labours of a zealous missioner. In statue he was somewhat below the middle size, with black and thick hair, of a grave aspect, and dark complexion; his talents were of the highest order, his constitution delicate, and his whole conduct sweetened by the virtues of meekness, and the most generous charity, by which he rendered himself amiable to all, and spent for the good of souls his labours, his talents, and his life.

CHAPTER XXIV.

OF WHAT FOLLOWED AFTER HIS DEATH.

No sooner was he dead than he assumed an angelic appearance, and his countenance remained as fresh and serene as if he still lived and was smiling. His companions were unable to satisfy themselves with admiring him; and they felt their souls replenished with such interior consolation, that it appeared to them the father had, immediately on his entrance to eternal joys, wished to reward them for the assistance they had rendered him in the missions. A number of

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portraits were taken by the best artists of the neighbourhood to satisfy the pious desires of many; and one of these was sent as a present to the principal personage of the community of Orta. All the people flocked to the place to dwell upon his features with devotion, to honour him by their tears, revere him by their kisses, and invoke his aid not without remarkable advantage to many. His wretched garments and whatever little thing had been used in his service, were all divided into the smallest pieces, and carried off with the greatest emulation as precious relics; nor would they have spared even the body itself, had they not been strictly prevented by those who were appointed to watch it.

There came many physicians and surgeons, drawn by respect for the holy father, who, struck with astonishment at the wonderful vivacity of colour and the serenity that appeared on the countenance of the deceased, determined to make an experiment by extracting blood from the left foot. When the vein was opened twelve hours after death, the blood issued forth of a lively colour, and flowed as freely as if it had proceeded from the veins of a living man in good health; which, being about six ounces in weight, was partly collected in linen cloths, and part preserved in a glass vessel, where it remained a long time without emitting any offensive smell: nor would the blood have ceased to flow, if the wound had not been closed and bandaged by the surgeon, as is done in the case of the living. Moreover, the countenance of the deceased was seen to perspire,

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and emit an abundance of moisture, which after being repeatedly wiped off with handkerchiefs, returned again, did not cease until the body was buried.

It is impossible to believe what an excitement was caused by these signs, which were judged out of the ordinary course of nature, (as was shown by the first physicians of Orta, in a learned dissertation,) not only amongst the common people, but also in persons of high repute and authority. It is certain that the proprietors who held more than thirty estates round about the Lago Maggiore, presented themselves in a body before the companion of Father Pinamonti, and protested that the holy father wished his body to be buried where God granted it rest from labour, and that they were resolved on no consideration to allow it to be transported anywhere else, hoping to be favoured from heaven, by the intercession of such a dear friend of God. This resolute and unexpected protest the father wished neither to oppose by a refusal, nor yield to by granting their request. He knew well that he had not the authority to decide upon such a matter without permission from Rome. It was resolved in the meantime that the body should remain at Orta as a deposit, until any contrary orders should be issued by the supreme head of the Society. Satisfied with this agreement, those gentlemen prepared to celebrate the obsequies with the most solemn pomp possible; carrying the body escorted by a vast number of lighted torches in procession to the principal church, pre-

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ceded by the confraternities in their habits, by all the priests of the surrounding districts in Copes; and followed by such a multitude of people, that the whole country round about the Lake appeared on that day to be stripped of its inhabitants. These virtuous peasants ceased not to honour by tears of affection that sacred deposit, which was chosen by God as the instrument of His great glory. It was a spectacle calculated to move every heart to devotion, to see a poor man who had but lately appeared in those parts, now honoured at his death with such a magnificent funeral, that nothing more could have been done at the death of the most illustrious archbishop of Milan.

The obsequies were celebrated in the church with the office and solemn mass, and his virtues were extolled by an eloquent priest with those praises that are usually attributed to the Saints; God Himself at the same time concurring to approve of the piety of the people in many ways, and to honour by numerous signs the merits of this His servant. The body was placed, clothed in the sacerdotal habits, in a coffin of cypress wood, on which was laid a plate inscribed with a short and honourable mention of the deceased. And this coffin was, by the desire of the public notary, placed on the left side of the first chapel, dedicated in honour of the Immaculate Conception, where no one had previously been buried, and where it was ordained that none should be deposited in future. In this funeral ceremony, many from distant countries joined, attracted,

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some by the fame of his eminent virtues, and others by the hope of obtaining special favours from heaven.

It would now remain for me in conclusion, to record one by one the many favours which are related to have been received, both before and after his burial by various persons, on recommending themselves to God through the merits and intercession of Father Pinamonti; but as these things, which are beyond the powers of nature, have not yet been examined and approved by those who have the authority, they are deferred to a more convenient time, as my intention in the present biography was to propose to my readers not wonderful actions, but such only as may be imitated, of which nature are the virtues which I have here undertaken to relate of this great servant of God.

LAUS DEO SEMPER.

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THE LIFE

OF THE

VENERABLE SERVANT OF GOD,

JOHN DE BRITTO, S. J.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH OF FATHER DE BEAUVAIS, S. J.

PRINTED AT PARIS, 1746.

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BOOK I.

In that part of the East Indies, where, at the epoch of which we write, the states of Mogul terminated, and which is bounded on one side by the Persian gulph, and on the other by the Bay of Bengal, is a peninsula composed of a number of small kingdoms, which, about the middle of the seventeenth century, were independent of each other, whilst all were tributary to the great Mogul. This country is about two hundred leagues in length from the territories of Bisnagar and Colconda to Cape Comorin, and about eighty leagues in width from Madura to Barcelona; a long chain of straggling mountains divide it from north to south; the countries situated at the foot of these mountains, as well as the plains, are exceedingly populous; the eastern and western coasts are even still more

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so. Europeans have long since established commercial relations at Madras, Pondicherry, and other places. Towards the southern extremity of the peninsula lie Malabar and Madura, two of the more extensive districts, each of which was in turn the theatre of the zeal, toil, and sacrifices of the servant of God whose life and actions we are about to present to the public. The apostle S. Thomas introduced the light of the Gospel into these countries. Besides the traditions and other monuments which confirm this opinion, several of which were in existence when S. Francis Xavier arrived there, many Christian observances had been ever constantly maintained, which prove that the inhabitants had been instructed in our holy religion by some of the earliest apostles and their successors. For the rest, however, idolatry is prevalent, and is firmly established. It was this which enkindled the zeal of the Jesuit missionaries, and to it they have devoted their labours and their lives, from the day that the glorious Xavier opened the path to them. This was the field which was presented to the ardour and the conquests of Father John De Britto, and truly we may say he found therein enough to suffer for the glory of God and the salvation of souls.

This illustrious man was born at Lisbon in the year 1648, during the reign of John IV. Highly as his parents were distinguished for their nobility, they were still more so for their piety. His father was Saviour De Britto Perevia, who had been for some time viceroy of Brazil; his

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mother was Donna Beatrix Perevia; the son inherited their virtues, and did honour to their blood by that true grandeur which sanctity imparts, and which to the prerogatives of birth add a splendour far more enduring than all the advantages this world can offer. In effect, Heaven was pleased to combine in this privileged soul the most lovely and amiable dispositions; they were looked upon as presages, announcing what John de Britto would afterwards accomplish for the glory of God and the honour of religion; nevertheless, he was born with so delicate a constitution, that scarcely had he received life than he seemed likely to lose it. A wish to preserve so precious a babe induced his parents to offer him to God by vow, under the protection of S. Francis Xavier; or, rather, may we not be permitted to suspect that a secret foresight of what he was one day to become, influenced them as much perhaps as natural affection and tenderness; the child was dressed in a garment similar to that which the saint had been accustomed to wear when on earth, and whilst investing himself with the robe, he seemed to imbibe the virtues of this great saint, and an ardent desire of imitating him; he chose him for his model, and always found in him a constant protector. Young De Britto lost his worthy father before he had completed his third year. Henceforth Almighty God deigned to supply the place of whatever was dearest to him on earth. Jealous of the entire possession of a heart destined to undertake such great things in His service, the

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Sovereign Master hastened to attach to Himself even the first-fruits of his inclinations, and soon gave him to understand that He had enriched him with no other view than that of attaching him irrevocably to His own service.

Don John IV. at this time occupied the throne of Portugal, which he had gained by freeing it from the domination of Spain. He had three sons; Don Theodosio, a prince of high expectation, died young. The two others were Don Alphonso and Don Pedro; the former had in his infancy been attacked by paralysis, from from which he never perfectly recovered; in effect, it materially affected his intellect, and gave great reason to apprehend that he would never be in a condition to wear the crown. Popular affection and expectation were therefore centred in Don Pedro, who, however, did not reign until after the death of Alphonsus; the latter inherited the sceptre from his father, but his mental alienation continued to increase, and he soon became utterly unequal to the task of government. In this painful conjuncture the states of Portugal were justly compelled to withdraw all authority from him, and transfer it to his brother Don Pedro, who accepted the title of Regent, and from thenceforth constituted the happiness of a nation, the throne of which he adorned when elevated to it by the demise of his brother. Young De Britto and some other nobles of the same age, composed the court, and were the chief associates of the youthful prince. In addition to the honour of being thus chosen,

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the king afforded every possible advantage for the instruction and improvement of De Britto; the most talented masters were charged with his education; and his progress was rapid in whatever branch of study his application might be centred. It was in the college directed by the fathers of the Society of Jesus that he perfected himself in piety and literature. The docile pupil duly corresponded with the views of the monarch who honoured him with his protection; he was the delight of the court, and was beloved by Don Pedro; he was the model held up to the example of the college to which he had been confided; his affable engaging manners made him universally liked; they were as natural to him as a certain air of dignity which never left him, but which had nothing repulsive or haughty about it. He was entering his fifteenth year, but the science of the saints and the spirit of religion were more fully developed in him than is usual at that age. Being prematurely enlightened, he began seriously to reflect on the step taken by his parents when they dedicated him to S. Francis Xavier, and he looked upon it as a special engagement to follow the traces of the great Apostle of the Indies, believing, moreover, that it was now time for him to ratify it. To correspond with the favour to which he considered himself indebted for the preservation of his life, he earnestly entreated admission into the Society of Jesus, the end of that institute being chiefly directed to the functions of an apostolic life. He was received by the Father Provincial, and from thence-

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forth thought only of the means of executing his pious project.

The favours which he had received from the king of Portugal, and the post which he occupied in the court of Don Pedro, forbade his withdrawal from the world, without the consent of his sovereign. Respect and decorum alike compelled him to solicit his majesty's permission. De Britto never swerved from a prescribed duty. He asked to retire from court, as one of the greatest favours the king could confer on him: the monarch was unwilling to consent, being sensible of the advantage which the young prince derived from the society of De Britto, whose counsels and example were so well calculated to benefit the Infant's court. The king yielded, however, to the urgent solicitations of his courtier; and the disciple, faithful to grace, immediately quitted a court which his early virtues had edified, and which was still more struck by the sacrifice he was making, in the renunciation of such flattering expectations.

De Britto entered the Jesuit noviciate at Lisbon, and soon excelled in every virtue. From the moment of his entrance upon the holy paths whither God had called him, he became deeply conscious of the importance of the duties which devolved upon him; and he set no bounds to his endeavours for the acquisition of perfection. Those souls who are the most favoured by grace, are more imperatively obliged to increase their merits, because their progress ought to be commensurate with the extraordinary gifts which they receive from Heaven. De Britto understood this,

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and complied with it. The fervour of the novice, however, did not cast him amidst the shoals which are so perilous to an insecure or ill-enlightened virtue: he carefully guarded himself against all singularity and excess. His grand object was to acquire the true spirit of the institute which he had embraced, and to render himself capable of complying with all its obligations, by means of true and solid mortification. Practices the most simple, or the most obscure, cost him nothing; he willingly undertook whatever was repulsive to others; he was sure to be found engaged in the meanest functions, as soon as he was free from the duties of prayer, spiritual instructions, or prescribed avocations. The Infant Don Pedro, who cherished a tender affection for young De Britto, honoured him with a visit: for some time the youth was sought for in vain, and was at length found attending upon a sick servant, whom, a few days before, he had requested permission to take charge of. The prince was informed of the circumstance, and as soon as De Britto appeared, he said to him, "I am delighted to see you engaged in the service of this new master, from whom you will receive far more solid remuneration than you would had you remained with me."

The piety of the fervent novice was unbounded when in presence of the adorable Sacrament of the altar: he was bathed in tears during the celebration of the divine mysteries, and in his communions; he was evidently penetrated with that spirit of faith and love which animates the

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purest souls when they approach the sacred banquet: he spent whole hours in holy communication with our Lord, whom he quitted in a state of transport, which his countenance betrayed, and which influenced all his actions and discourses. His fellow novices eagerly sought his company, especially on communion days, declaring that they were both instructed and edified thereby, and that they never felt themselves better prepared for that grand act, than after "seeing or hearing the Panegyrist of the wonders of the holy eucharist," as they styled De Britto. The graces which he received at the foot of the altar produced the most marked effects on all the rest of his conduct. Exact and punctual in the most minute observances, he scrupulously acquitted himself of whatever superiors enjoined; he studied, and even forestalled their wishes. Obedience had no trials able to moderate his eagerness in its practice. It seemed as if his docility was a naturally pleasing inclination, rather than an imposed obligation. When any one expressed surprise at his promptitude in obeying, he used to smile, and answer, "That he had already gone through one noviciate; having been accustomed to give up his own will when he was at court."

His exactitude was by no means annoying to others. Gentle and affable towards every one, he easily accommodated himself to the diversity of character and education which he found amongst the novices; his humility and charity concurring to make them forget the consideration and difference which his illustrious birth might

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have drawn upon him. He often said that he never knew real nobility until he had the happiness of being associated with the companions and disciples of Jesus Christ. Every duty towards his neighbour became important in his sight, and worthy of his respect; he testified this on an occasion when any one else would have suffered immensely from the revolt of pride.

One of the trials inflicted on the novices of the Society of Jesus is, that of serving the sick in the hospitals; where, for the space of a fortnight, they are subjected to the meanest drudgery. De Britto was sent with the rest, and a very peevish troublesome old man was entrusted to his charge: whatever service he might perform for his patient, he received nothing but abuse, and sometimes even blows: our young novice never made a complaint, or relented in his attentive assiduity: the old man was thoroughly ashamed of his misconduct, and sending for the novice-master, he owned, with tears in his eyes, how shamefully he had treated his holy novice, and how much he deplored having done so; adding, that this virtuous young man was such a model of patience, as to have given him a lesson in that virtue, which would for ever prevent him from forgetting the resignation due to the will of God, whatever might be his future sufferings. The sick man kept his promise, and gave great edification by his meekness under severe and continual sufferings; always declaring that this wonderful change was entirely due to the example of De Britto.

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After thus perfectly completing his term of noviciate, our saintly youth made his first vows: he was then sent to Evora, where he employed two more years in repassing his literary studies; making, at the same time, considerable progress in piety. After these preliminary labours he was sent to Coimbra; and as his health required attention, he was not employed as a professor till he had completed his course of philosophy and theology.

This double career gave the young student ample field for the display of his excellent abilities. His penetration, subtility, correctness of judgment, in a word, whatever could indicate the skill of a master rather than the efforts of a scholar, were perceived and admired in him. Whatever branch of science he was applied to, served only to draw out the talent which Heaven had bestowed on him, and which prepared him for the highest enterprises belonging to an apostolic life.

Cultivation of the mind did not check the zeal with which he endeavoured to perfect his heart. Religious virtues accompanied and sanctified his application to study. Ever humble amidst the success with which God blessed his endeavours, he seemed indifferent to praise, which he looked upon as tokens of that charity which people were kind enough to grant to the feeble efforts of a beginner. This was his own expression in a letter to Donna Beatrix, his mother, who wrote to congratulate with him on the honours he had acquired in a public performance. His studies

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never led him to interrupt or diminish the time required by prayer or other spiritual duties; nor did they interfere with his usual recollected manner. When at the foot of the altar he found no difficulty in his intercourse with God, because He was habitually present to his mind. His conversation showed this, which indeed had been the case from his first entrance into religion. Whenever he spoke of God, his transports revealed the ardent love of Him which burned in his heart.

The celebrated university of Coimbra, deeming itself happy in the possession of so accomplished a member, proposed him to the other students as a living rule on which to form themselves; and with good reason; for in De Britto there was that combination of all that is most edifying in piety, and most animating in studious emulation. Being recalled to Lisbon to teach humanities, he was distinguished as a master, by the same qualities which had previously gained him so much applause as a scholar. The youths entrusted to his charge experienced all the advantage of being formed by so excellent a master. His zeal in cultivating those young plants, was a good prelude to his future apostolate; for he was already sighing for the time when he should labour in the regions which the great Xavier had watered with his sweat and with his tears. This was the object of his daily prayers; he manifested his wishes by the most impassioned expressions, in the panegyric which he delivered in honour of the saint, in presence of the fathers of the college in

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Lisbon. The Almighty hastened to grant his petition, and prepared the way for him by the most favourable means.

Father Balthasar d'Acosta arrived from Malabar, having been obliged to quit that newly formed mission, in order to collect additional gospel-labourers in Europe: the harvest in the Indies was too abundant for the few who were then employed in it. The life they were obliged to lead was as terrifying as the labours they had to undergo; and strength of constitution was as necessary as courage to the missionary engaged there. De Britto offered himself without delay; he reiterated his entreaties, but his delicate health was a serious obstacle: his fervour, however, triumphed; and the expectations which his virtues raised, removed all other difficulties. He prepared himself for the reception of holy orders, and received them with all the dispositions of an humble faith and consummate fervour: he was twenty-eight years of age when he celebrated his first Mass. He impatiently waited the moment of embarkation. His design had hitherto been kept secret; but the necessary preparations for his departure divulged it; no sooner was it known in Lisbon, than everything conspired to defeat his generous project. His mother, his family, the noblemen belonging to the court, the papal nuncio, even the regent himself, opposed it. Complaints, reproaches, representations, advice—all was brought to bear, in order to arrest the enterprise. Donna Beatrix especially omitted nothing that maternal love could suggest in order

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to retain this beloved child. She had recently lost her eldest son in the service of his country; and she besought the other not to refuse an afflicted mother the only consolation that was left her; she entreated him not to increase her severe grief, by the poignant regret of this so cruel a separation: tears seconded her words, but De Britto was immovable. The mother had recourse to the Nuncio, beseeching him to interpose his authority: he did so; he spoke to the new missionary; but was soon obliged to yield to the arguments of the young father. He discerned and respected the views of Providence over this generous proselyte of the apostolate, and declared as much to Donna Beatrix. The piety of this virtuous mother overcame all the repugnances of nature, and De Britto easily triumphed over all other obstacles. That he might be exposed to no future molestations on the subject, he fled secretly, and embarked. Whilst on ship-board he employed himself in all the good works which occasion presented; and, of course, the preparations necessary for a long voyage made them numerous: in the meantime the people of Lisbon knew not what was become of him. A few days before the time fixed for the departure of the vessels, he returned to the college to take leave of his religious brothers, and to edify them a little more by additional traits of humility.

It was customary for the Portuguese Jesuits not to start for the Indian missions without first being presented to the king, to have the honour of kissing his hand: in their case it was really a duty

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of gratitude, and a public homage which they felt themselves bound to pay, in consideration of the special protection with which the kings of Portugal honoured the Society, and seconded its labours, by the magnificence of their foundations. Two or three days after complying with this law of gratitude and respect, they set out from the college of S. Andrew, accompanied by all the fathers belonging to it, and passing through the city in procession, proceeded thus to the banks of the Tagus. This edifying spectacle attracts a vast concourse of people of all ranks: the missionaries are distinguished by the crucifix, which they wear on their breast: it is the symbol of their engagement in the new militia; after mutual farewells they at length separate with every possible demonstration of the most tender charity. The regret of those who remain behind is shown by their tears; whilst the courage of the missionaries who depart, is manifested by their impatience to reach the term of their desires. Father De Britto foresaw the trials to which this public farewell would expose him, and had the prudence to evade it by repairing privately on board the vessel destined for the voyage; he carefully concealed himself, nor did he make his appearance until the vessel was under weigh. He quitted Portugal about the middle of March, 1676. The same day was rendered illustrious by the departure of two bands of missionaries; that to which De Britto belonged, under the guidance of Father Balthasar d'Acosta, and the other under Father Prosper Inforcetta, Procurator of the province of China, who, with

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his troop of chosen workmen, was going to perpetuate the success of the Christian name in that vast empire. Regularly every year did the Port of Lisbon send forth, as from a fertile source, an abundance of evangelical treasures, which tended to support and increase the riches of salvation, so eagerly conveyed to the East by missionaries from other nations;—a striking proof of the mercies of "Him who willeth all men to be saved," and come to the knowledge of the truth.

For some time the weather was most favourable to our voyagers, who had already entered the torrid zone, and were near the Line, which they hoped to cross rapidly; but all at once, fear succeeded their bright hopes: an obstinate calm arrested the progress of the vessel; and notwithstanding all the efforts and skill of the crew, they were detained in this painful situation for several days: the inconvenience was increased by the violent shocks which the waves inflicted on the ship, and which occasioned excessive fatigue to the passengers. In fine, the excessive heat of that latitude, added to the defective ventillation of the vessel, corrupted the provisions and engendered sickness. The greater part of the crew was attacked, and soon reduced to extremity: upwards of eighty received the last sacraments, and every moment was expected to be their last. The ship seemed to be transformed into a hospital; nothing was to be seen but dying creatures; even those who had hitherto warded off the contagion, could scarcely hope to remain long free from its attacks. Father De Britto signalized his charity in these melan-

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choly circumstances: a heart so compassionate as his could not but experience most bitter grief at the sight of such an accumulation of misery, and of so many resources applied in vain. He lent himself to all the ministries of Christian mercy, for the spiritual and corporal relief of the sick: nothing daunted him, except the sight of so many wretched objects, whose sufferings he was unable to relieve: gladly would he have purchased the cure of each one at the expense of his own life.

The contagious distemper made such alarming and extensive progress, that after having attempted all human remedies, it was deemed advisable to seek supernatural and miraculous aid. They unanimously addressed themselves to the Apostle of the Indies; and during nine days appealed to his intercession and power with God, by means of the most fervent prayers. The success was prompt and complete. In a few days they had left the Line far behind them, and the sick recovered perfect health. The celerity with which these events were accomplished, left no room to doubt of the miracle, or that it was due to the protection of S. Francis Xavier. Physicians, the best skilled in the nature of the complaint, when informed of its rapid disappearance, declared the case to be evidently miraculous. The vessel, when clear of this danger, soon neared the cape of Good Hope; but as they were on the point of doubling it, the wind suddenly shifted, and for several days they contended in vain against its impetuosity: they retrograded rather than advanced. The recollection of the protection of the great Xavier, was still present

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to every mind and heart, and sufficed to enkindle new hopes of being again favoured by him in their then present danger. Gratitude for the previous benefit animated and strengthened their just confidence: scarcely had they began a second novena in his honour, than the wind immediately changed, and the ship resumed her course, according to the wishes of her crew. They soon reached the Isle of Madagascar, and then Goa. On their arrival at the long-wished-for term of their voyage, every one hastened to discharge the promised duty of returning most heart-felt thanks to God, at the tomb of him whose auspicious intercession they had experienced on two such memorable occasions. Father De Britto joined his homage of gratitude to the piety of the rest; but how many private prayers and affections did he not add to this unanimous expression of gratitude! On the point of entering the career of his apostolate, he gave full vent to all the sentiments which his ardent zeal could suggest; the predominant passion of his heart was to become the faithful imitator of S. Francis Xavier; this noble ambition was redoubled as he knelt at the tomb of the Apostle of the Indies. He derived sensible consolation from revering a body which had exhausted itself in labouring for his neighbour after ten years of toil, and which God had glorified by preserving it from corruption for upwards of a century. But this prodigy did more than create a merely sterile piety and respect; he found in it sufficient to enkindle his desires for the salvation of souls; and a guarantee of efficacious patronage

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in the course of his approaching laborious ministry. Animated by these additional motives, he daily prostrated himself several times at the foot of the tabernacle, supplicating, through the intercession of S. Francis Xavier, for all the virtues requisite for the Apostolate, and praying for them with all the fervour of an apostle, who only sighs for the happiness of sacrificing himself to the glory of Jesus Christ. Father De Britto remained three years at Goa, devoting them chiefly to the acquirement of those virtues requisite for the ministry to which God called him. He applied himself likewise to the study of the Indian dialects, and had learned sufficient at the end of a few months to make himself understood by the people whom he was commissioned to instruct; for his time at Goa was not devoted exclusively to his own advantage; he entered upon his career even then, employing himself in every sort of work that would benefit his neighbour. He gave several missions in the neighbouring towns and villages; everywhere giving proofs of a zeal worthy of the ministry which the was later on to exercise amongst the pagans. He was assiduous in hearing confessions, teaching the Christian doctrine to children, visiting hospitals, assisting the sick, and begging from door to door in behalf of the bashful poor. To these occupations, which were of almost daily recurrence, he added frequent preaching, always followed by the best of results; Portuguese, Spaniards, and Indians pressed to hear him, and always went away penetrated with sorrow for their sins. Usury, revenge, and profligacy of morals, were the sub-

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jects of the holy man's most frequent attacks. He succeeded in converting a great number of obstinate sinners. Restitutions were made, edifying and permanent reconciliations replaced hereditary animosities ; but he had many obstacles to contend with in his war against libertinage. This disorder was accredited by the example and authority of the most wealthy of the inhabitants, and was facilitated by necessary intercourse with the native Indians. In spite of the zeal of the evangelic labourers at Goa, vice maintained its ground with display and with impunity. Father de Britto was deeply pained by the deplorable state in which he found both morals and religion; and believed himself bound to add his efforts to those of other ministers, who were endeavouring to suppress these scandals. He availed himself of the lively and pathetic eloquence with which Heaven had gifted him, accompanying it with all that unction has of most insinuating. Not satisfied with publicly inveighing against licentiousness, he personally visited several of those who were publicly known to live in disorder, and spoke to them so energetically and successfully, as to induce them to dismiss the accomplices of their guilt. Hell raised up many storms against his zeal; he dissipated some, and became the victim of others. On one occasion, in particular, as he was returning with his companion to the college, after having prevailed on two young persons to forsake those who were joined with them in the bonds of iniquity, he was assailed by a troop of ruffians, who loaded him with insults and blows, and then went off, leaving

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both him and his companion half dead. They were discovered in this condition, and with great difficulty were conveyed home. The governor being informed of the assault, ordered the arrest of the guilty parties, and was resolved to punish them with the utmost rigour. Father De Britto, deeming himself but too happy in this opportunity of suffering for the love of Jesus Christ, would signalize his gratitude to the author of all mercy by an act of most beautiful generosity. He sent to implore pardon for, and the liberation of his persecutors; and as soon as he was able to walk, he went and threw himself at the governor's feet, when he obtained the favour which had been refused to the first entreaties of his charity. In this manner did zeal and love for his neighbour sanctify his residence at Goa, and prepare him for the laborious functions which awaited him amongst the idolatrous Indians.

Before he set out for those missions, Father De Britto gave another proof of the desire which he had of irrevocably binding himself to the conversion of the savages. The divorce which he had already made from the world, to follow the maxims of the gospel in all the purity of a perfect life, was a proof of the sincerity and elevation of his sentiments; they were moreover justified by the step he took when he so firmly resisted the tears of his family, and the regret of his country; but it was his wish to confirm thereby an irrevocable engagement, and to cut off from himself all possibility of returning to Portugal, at least for a permanency. It is not always by

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the first sacrifices that a heart, which is faithful to grace, can feel secure of its own constancy: a wise precaution leads it to act as if we still had everything to fear from self, and as not venturing to trust one's own fidelity, until bound by such additional ties as cannot possibly be severed. Such was the law which Father De Britto imposed on himself; humility as well as zeal determined him to forestall the dangers of an inconsistency from which his well-tried virtue might seem to have nothing to fear. He requested of his superiors that he might be exclusively confined to that part of the Indies whither he was about to be sent, and for ever remain under the orders of the provincial, who, for the time being, should govern those missions. His superiors were edified by this new proof of his fervour and disengagement; they acceded to his wishes, and from thenceforward he looked upon himself as nothing but a labourer, destined to run his course in the service of the natives of Malabar.

The functions of the missionary in those regions have for their object the conversion of the idolators belonging to Malabar and the adjacent states, together with the instruction of the neophytes whom grace has enlightened with the truths of the Gospel. It was on this vast theatre that the two apostles of the Indies, SS. Thomas and Francis Xavier, illustrated their labours, and by such stupendous prodigies manifested the divinity of the religion whose ministers they were. The Jesuit missionaries have not limited their zeal to

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the sanctification of the Malabarese; they have carried the conquest of the Gospel far beyond their territories; at the time of Father De Britto's arrival in India they had penetrated as far as the kingdom of Madura, where they had successfully laboured to extirpate the infection which paganism had propagated there. This mission was the cherished portion which Father De Britto had in view, for there he might find everything to animate his zeal, namely, immense toil, a life of extreme hardship, formidable and incessant opposition; here was abundantly sufficient to satisfy his noble soul, as well as his avidity for suffering. We cannot give a better idea of the heroism and holy dispositions of the missionary, than by tracing a rapid sketch of the mission which he coveted in reference to all others.

The Madura Mission takes its name from the capital city of one of the celebrated Indian states; it is not, however, circumscribed within the limits of the city and kingdom. It includes within its labours Ginghi, Uelour, Tanjaor, Coutour, great part of the territories of Coculum, Travancor, Manapar, Tenor, Golconda, Trichinopoli, Marava, and other countries less important as to extent, but quite as difficult to cultivate. It is a vast field, considering the small number of workmen employed in it; and a most irksome one, considering the many dangers connected with it. The persecutions which the pagans are continually exciting, the excessive heat of the climate, the ferocious and venemous creatures which infest the land, toils of every description which

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must be endured, together with the almost total absence of diet customary to Europeans, are some of the many trials falling to the lot of those who devote themselves to the missions of Madura. Father Robert de Nobili, a Roman Jesuit, was the first to make the attempt. He was the great-nephew of Pope Marcellus II., and nephew of the celebrated Cardinal Bellarmine. Renouncing all the advantages of his illustrious birth, he went to labour for the propagation of the faith in India. His zeal and labours for the conversion of the infidels have immortalized his memory, and rendered it for ever venerable to the Christians of those countries. This fervent missionary began by examining the sources of the incessant obstacles which opposed the conversion of the Bramins, none of whom had as yet yielded to the doctrines of the Gospel; even S. Francis Xavier and those who succeeded him, never met with any docility in the members of this sect. After much consideration on this important point, Father Robert remarked that the want of success in preaching the Gospel, arose less from the opposition to the Christian faith, than to hatred of those who announced it. Averse as they were to certain European customs, the Bramins allowed themselves to be led into inveterate prejudices against our religion, till at length their acrimony against Europeans in general made them take every opportunity of vilifying them, representing them as infamous people, deserving alike of execration and contempt. The aversion of the pagans was based

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upon a thousand chimeras, and on these they grounded their absurd accusations. Among other things they could not pardon the Europeans the imaginary crime of slaying cows and eating their flesh. These animals are in high veneration among the Indians, being ranked in the number of their divinities. This was one of the prejudices of paganism which Father de Nobili attacked, and he did so with the same zeal that he employed in combating the other dogmas of idolatry. But he studied beforehand the many difficulties that could check the progress of the Gospel, and formed such projects as he deemed most calculated to remove them; their prejudices were of long standing; he chose those ways, however, which Heaven inspired for the execution of his project. He carefully investigated the manners, characteristics, laws, and customs of the Bramins, the secrets of their false religion, the fabulous records on which its system rests, the superstitious ceremonies peculiar to its rites, and the life and conduct of those who teach, and of those who follow it. When furnished with all this important information, he laid aside everything which could externally denote his European origin. He assumed the dress and mode of life of the natives. His first essay was to imitate the Rajahs, who constituted one of the highest ranks in India; he dressed like them, associated with them, appeared in public with the same marks of distinction as they did; his success, however, in converting them did not correspond with the uprightness of his intention; this first plan was aban-

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doned, and he attempted another. He assumed the garb of the secular Bramins; he wore a long flowing robe, with a thick silken cord in the manner of a shoulder-belt, being the mark of honour which distinguishes that sect. Exteriorly he was like them in everything, with the exception of the paints with which they colour their faces. This similarity of dress was as favourable to him now, as it had before been with regard to the Rajahs. He became acquainted with some of the principal Bramins, he gained their esteem, found facilities for seeing and conversing with them, yet he did not succeed in furthering their salvation. They were continually surrounded by a number of Bonzes, and being prejudiced by the calumnies of these mendacious ministers, who incessantly inveigh against the Christian religion, they resisted all the attempts which, during three years, the zealous missionary made for their conversion. The failure of these two attempts did not dismay Father de Nobili; zeal sustained his courage; he devised another plan, and made his appearance in the garb of the Saniastes, or penitent Bramins, who are exceedingly respected by the natives, and are honoured as masters of the law. They profess a life of great austerity, and of disengagement from the riches and pleasures of the world. Their diet consists in a little rice boiled in water, which they allow themselves once a day towards sunset. This mode of life and raiment succeeded with the zealous missioner; he made himself respected, was listened to, and had the happiness of

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converting a great number of Bramins; such was the consolatory blessing with which Almighty God recompensed his persevering endeavours to increase the kingdom of Jesus Christ. Had he, in cowardice, yielded to the first difficulties which defeated his designs, how many souls would have remained enveloped in the shades of darkness, would have persevered and have died therein! Our apostolic man understood the price of the Blood of God, as well as the extent of His mercy, eager to apply the fruits of it to all mankind; and this was sufficient to urge him, in spite of every obstacle, to use his best endeavours to give salutary fertility to countries which hell had desolated for so many centuries. Nothing could arrest his ardour for the establishment of a mission which seemed of such importance to him as that of Madura.

But to return to Father De Britto. He quitted Goa after having besought and gathered, at the tomb of his glorious patron and model, all the dispositions requisite for the grand task he was about to undertake. He, with eight companions, reached the port of Negapatan, and traversed the kingdom of Tanjaor; but was detained by illness for nearly a year at Sattamangala. In fine, after encountering many dangers, especially from the overflowing of the rivers, he reached the college of Ambalagata: he had been directed thither in order to prepare himself to make his last vows, and to await the orders of his Provincial with regard to the precise spot of his first labours. The house at Ambalagata is not only established for

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the purpose of educating youth in piety and letters, but likewise to serve as a seminary to supply the missions of the whole peninsula. It is here that candidates for the Apostolate prepare for the functions which they are later on to discharge ;—here they study the virtues which are to qualify them for such duties ; and it is here also that they receive their appointment to the various missions destined for them by Heaven ; to which they repair, after studying the dialect of their respective missions. The college of Ambalagata is situated near the Angamala mountains, which form a long chain, representing the figure of a saw ; and this gives rise to their name. The people inhabiting them have retained the faith preached to them by S. Thomas. Christianity stood its ground there for more than sixteen centuries, without any mixture of idolatry : a glorious and decided testimony surely in favour of the Church of Jesus Christ. It is true to say the Greek schism introduced some errors amongst these mountaineers, who for a time were separated from the communion of the Holy See, and this was owing to the solicitations of some Armenian bishops who had joined the Patriarch of Alexandria. Notwithstanding these innovations, the people still retained many essential practices peculiar to the Roman Catholic religion ; for instance, the form of the sacrifice under both species, the adoration of the cross, prayers for the dead, the fast of Lent, the consecration, ministry, and the priestly ceremonies ; with many other points, clear vestiges of the truth and purity of their former belief.

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From the earliest epoch of the Church, Angamala was held in such honour, both for the dignity of its founder and the multitude of believers, that its pastors received the title of archbishops. Their jurisdiction extended even to China. As it was of high importance to clear this vast diocese of the errors that infected it, Alexius de Menezes, of the Augustinian order, and Primate of all the Indies, resolved to make the attempt—an attempt worthy alike of his judgment and of his exalted piety. He quitted Goa, resolved to make the visitation of his whole diocese. He conducted himself with such charity and prudence as to conciliate all minds and hearts: he concluded his visitation by the convocation of a provincial council, in which he eloquently and successfully combated all the errors that schism had introduced. All his diocese yielded to the solidity and force of the arguments employed by the learned archbishop; the people retracted their disobedience, and unanimously embraced the doctrines of the Roman Church. The Jesuits of the province of Malabar were charged with the care of the diocese, under the primatial authority of the archbishop of Goa. It was at the seminary of Ambalagata that all the ministers were trained destined to serve and instruct this numerous flock, more especially the Castanar secular priests, who are employed in the service of the church of Angamala: they are taught the Syriac tongue, that they may celebrate the holy mysteries in that language, according to ancient rite, and discharge the other ceremonies peculiar to their ministry. The Christians of

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that Church observe two very edifying customs: 1. During Lent their abstinence is so strict, that they refuse themselves the use of eggs, milk diet, and every sort of fish; but what costs them much more, they deprive themselves of betel, the produce of a sort of palm-tree, the fruit of which resembles an almond. The leaf of this shrub is much used in Indian cookery; it is bitter, but when mixed with arrow-root, which is very sweet, the two form a paste, which is baked in shell-lime, and is the ordinary diet used to strengthen the stomach, and prevent the effects of a bad digestion, so that the privation of it is no small penance; for in addition to being judged so useful to their health, custom has rendered it almost an agreeable necessity. 2. They have a custom worthy of the tender charity that reigns among them. On the great solemnities they imitate the agapes, or repasts of the primitive Christians. The people all assemble together near the church, and place themselves in order at the tables prepared for the distribution of the rice, of which they generally cook as much as will suffice for seven or eight thousand persons. The Castanar priest makes a prayer, and then blesses the food prepared; each one receives as much as he requires. The meal being ended, the priest makes a second prayer, and after mutual good wishes and farewells, they separate, and joyfully return to their respective habitations.

Father De Britto made no long stay at the seminary of Ambalagata; he went to prepare for his solemn profession of the four vows; and he

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spent four weeks in the exercises of retreat, in the manner prescribed by the holy founder of the Society. He came out of it burning with new flames which divine love had enkindled in his heart, and which filled him with tender sentiments of piety, whilst he pronounced the formula of his last irrevocable engagement. The victim was already prepared by a succession of heroic sacrifices; he offered himself on that happy day with a perfection and generosity, equalled only by the courage and constancy which he exhibited in his final immolation.

Father De Britto made his solemn vows into the hands of Father Blaise Azevedo, the provincial, in the month of March, 1682, and then received his appointment to the Madura mission, whither he soon repaired. On his arrival, he assumed the dress of Pandarists, a class held in high repute among the Indians, on account of their austerity of life. Experience had taught the missionaries that this exterior easily gained them access to the professors of all the various sects. The appearance of reform of which they make profession, gives them great authority; and as they are less preposterous in their penances than the Saniastes, they can with more facility enter into communication with all ranks. Father De Britto determined to adopt their costume, because it would give greater latitude to the exercise of his zeal; securing him fuller liberty for announcing the doctrines of salvation; and under cover of externals, he might hope to gain credit for the word of God. It will not be deemed

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misplaced here, if we give a few more details of the dress and mode of life of the Indian pagan penitents; we shall better understand the rigour to which the missionaries condemned themselves in order to people the kingdom of Jesus Christ, when we see the means His enemies employ to devastate it.

The temperature is very high in the kingdom of Madura; to avail themselves of every hour in the day, and employ them in cultivating the vineyard of the father of the family, the evangelic labourers who toil therein, have no other garment than a long piece of yellow cloth, with which they envelope the whole figure, wrapping one end of it round their head: to this they sometimes add a sort of cap, which covers half the forehead. They allow the beard to grow, a long beard being a mark of distinction amongst them; they usually carry the skin of an animal either in their hand or on their shoulder, to serve the purposes of a seat and of a bed, and carry a long staff in the other hand, the symbol of authority amongst the Indians. They generally walk barefoot, or on occasions requiring some show of dignity, they wear a kind of wooden sandal, which does not cover the foot, nor has it either tie or strap, being fastened to the foot by means of a wooden peg fixed between the great toe and the second toe; the sole of the sandal rests upon two thick wedges of wood, which gives it firmness, and protects the foot from the burning sands they have to cross. This foot-gear is very painful at first, and induces terrible swellings on the feet and legs, affording

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no small share of suffering and merit to the missionary. Their long journeys are made barefoot: the diet corresponds with the dress—whatever has life is forbidden meat to the Indian penitent, and consequently to all those who imitate their austerity and seek to win their respect. A little ill-prepared rice, a few wild herbs, and some plain milk, is their sole sustenance under their laborious toils. The accomplishment of their heavenly Father's will furnishes the disciples with the same food as it did their Divine Master in his mission upon earth. Such is the rigorous system the missionary must impose upon himself if he hopes to make the doctrine of salvation acceptable to his Indian hearers; it does not terrify the courage of the priest, and God has been pleased to bless it with the most successful results. Simplicity of dress announces them as apostolic men; but the penitential life which they lead in secret as well as in public, prepares a success to their zeal, such as grace only grants to the heroic virtues which itself has formed.

In this garb, then, did Father De Britto begin his evangelical courses. He set out with another missionary and a few neophytes; they all travelled on foot, and though they might often have lessened their toil by taking a boat and paddling along the coast, the father always chose the shortest road, even though it might be the most painful; he was thus able to satisfy his eagerness to reach the scene of his labours, and at the same time practise that mortification which he deemed so essential to his ministry. All the

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provision of the travellers consisted in a little baked rice. For the rest they were without anxiety, notwithstanding the many dangers, and their ignorance of the road they had to follow. It was in the month of April, 1683, that our zealous missionary made his first essay of an apostolic life. The little troop reached the foot of the mountain, where they were obliged to stop and look out for a guide before they could venture further, lest they should mistake their path across the summit of the mountains; they had in effect strayed considerably from the direct road. Whilst they were in search of some one who could set them right, a violent storm arose, and they were soon completely drenched with rain. There was no alternative but to hasten to the nearest habitation. Heaven discovered one to them at no great distance; on applying for admission, they were assailed by a thousand questions, as useless as they were importunate; and they were thus exposed to the violence of the storm much longer than was needful. Disguised as they were by their dress, there was something in their air which betrayed their European birth. At length, after much demuring, the owners of the house allowed them to enter, just to seek shelter from the weather. They retired together into a corner, and remained there the whole night without any relief, covered with mud, and shivering with wet and cold. Two Bramins who happened to be in the house offered to serve them as guides on the following day. Father De Britto accepted an offer which seemed so advantageous. They

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resumed their journey towards sun-set, intending to reach the top of the mountain; to accomplish this, however, they had to open themselves a path through fragments of rocks, and thickets of brambles and briars. They succeeded, but with such toil, especially to Father De Britto, who, being constitutionally delicate, that he was completely exhausted; for some time courage supplied the place of strength, and supported by the protection of Heaven, he seemed to acquire new strength under every new difficulty; but at last God permitted the difficulties to come without the alloy, and he was on the point of sinking under them. The inconvenience of the journey was materially increased by the rapid pace of the two guides; he could only follow them at a distance, and that with extreme difficulty. On reaching a favourable spot, they halted to take a little rest, and devise means of escaping from the woods which covered the mountain tops: there was danger in remaining there, owing to the numbers of tigers, bears, and other wild beasts, whose haunts were thus unwarrantably invaded by our travellers. A monstrous elephant was at no great distance from their resting place; but God protected them from all danger, and they got clear of the mountain after a march of eleven leagues; they had still the same distance to traverse before reaching Sattamangala. Father De Britto's feet were not only swollen, they were wounded and bleeding; nevertheless, far from yielding to the force of pain, he persisted in walking on to the Christian settlement; the

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inhabitants came forth in crowds to meet him, and welcomed him with sincere expressions of delight; yet this, and the consolation which he himself experienced on finding himself amongst them, could not prevent the effects of his over-exertion and fatigue. He was soon reduced to extremity; he again fell ill at Sattamangala of malignant fever; Heaven watched over the preservation of a minister destined to increase its conquests. After a month's illness, Father De Britto nearly recovered his health and strength, and accordingly ventured to set out on his journey to Madura. This journey was quite as trying to him as the previous one in Malabar: he again encountered steep mountains and formidable precipices; nor could he reach the summits of the former, otherwise than by scrambling on his hands and knees, clinging to the shrubs and projecting pieces of rock; without this precaution he would probably have rolled down the steep declivities, and have been lost. He was three days in surmounting these obstacles, and on the fourth day, he with his companions were overtaken by night, when they hoped to have had full time to reach some village where they might find shelter. They were obliged to halt in a valley thickly covered with brush-wood, the haunt of tigers, where they were consequently exposed to much danger. They remained on foot nearly the whole night, and before they ventured to take any sleep at all, they lighted several fires at various distances around them; a very necessary precaution, for when the voracious animals approached in hopes of satisfy-

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ing their hunger, they fled at the sight of the flames. After escaping this danger, Father De Britto started early the next morning and reached the kingdom of Mellouro; here he found two Jesuit missionaries, who welcomed him, and nursed him with all the care and charity that his great weakness and recent fatigue rendered necessary. As soon as he was sufficiently restored to resume his journey, he set out on the Eve of S. Ignatius for the residence of Coleï, situated at the entrance of Ginghi, and here he celebrated the festival of the founder of the Society. He spent some weeks at Coleï, as well to re-establish his health, as to perfect himself in the dialect of the kingdom; for he was anxious to acquire certain idioms and usages peculiar to the Bramins, a study all the more necessary to the missionary, as it would be impossible for him to do much to benefit the Indians, unless he is able to hold frequent intercourse with men who are so much considered amongst them.

In Europe the charity of an evangelical minister knows nothing of all these frivolous distinctions of rank and birth: it embraces every state, and lends itself openly and equally to all those to whom it can be useful. But in India the charity of the missionary, though not limited in his heart, is obliged to be limited in his sphere of action: there is one degree of rank reputed absolutely infamous: those who belong to it are called Parias. No missionary can venture to speak to them in public, or proclaim himself their pastor, without at once rendering himself useless.

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to all the rest of the town or country which he has chosen for the scene of his labours. When charity leads him to consecrate himself to the salvation of this despised class, he must do it secretly, and with great precaution. The work of God would unquestionably suffer (and this has often been the case,) were they to follow up the first impulses of zeal; or if they neglected the rules of prudence and condescension.

Father De Britto was deeply pained at being thus obliged to limit his labours with regard to the Parias, and in not being able to assemble them together with the other Christians, for the public ceremonies of the Church. He was aware that the Church has at all times thought proper to condescend to certain peculiarities, when they did not interfere with her faith and discipline; especially when this condescension disposed those whom she was winning over to the fold, to lay aside those obstacles, whether natural, civil, or political, which were likely to prevent so great a good. He knew that for more than thirty-six years after the death of Jesus Christ, the apostles allowed the Jews to practise circumcision, and some of their other legal ceremonies: they did the same, too, with regard to the Gentiles, whom they merely forbade the use of such customs as savoured of idolatry, and which were necessarily prohibited. He was, moreover, aware of the favourable manner in which the Holy See had explained itself with regard to the necessity of labouring with little display in the instruction of this portion of the Indian population; thereby

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to shield the susceptibilities of the nobles, whose conversion was of such importance to the success of the gospel in those countries. All these considerations induced the holy man to conform himself to the conduct hitherto followed by those missionaries with whom he was then associated; and he did this without any fear of failing in the common duties, either of zeal or charity. However safe he might feel in the public functions of his ministry, authorized by the motives already detailed, he neglected no means of sanctifying every class of persons. With the Parias, he tried to soften the miseries attached to their condition, and he succeeded, chiefly by his assiduous though secret intercourse with them, and still more so by his instructions on the gospel, which taught them how to make a holy use of their humiliation. With regard to the nobles whom he converted, he zealously combated their proud prejudices, and whatever could turn them from the humility and charity of Jesus Christ, strongly impressing on them their obligation of reconciling the prerogatives of their birth and rank with the consideration due to all the followers of one common master. On these points, however, the holy missionary only found docility in a small number of Bramins, who had embraced the faith with sincerity. To the others to whom he announced the kingdom of God, this necessity of being associated with the lower orders in the practice and belief of one and the same religion, was so repulsive as to render nugatory all the endeavours used by the holy man to dispel their darkness.

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The nobles of India seldom lay aside certain prejudices; they are haughty, obstinate, and extremely averse to Europeans, whom they despise; fancying that they themselves combine all that is most excellent in knowledge, with all that is most noble in origin. Both these prepossessions spring from the fabulous opinion which they have of their chief divinity Brama; whom they all revere as their creator and master. On this belief is grounded the disdain in which they hold all other people who do not submit to these extravagancies; or who cannot boast, as they do, of being the descendants of this chimerical divinity.

Father De Britto understood all the difficulties he should have to encounter in the conversion of the Bramins. An obstinacy, grounded on the personal interest of rank and fortune, seemed to be one of the greatest obstacles he had to contend with; it did not, however, terify his zeal. To succeed the more surely in the enterprize which grace inspired, he resolved to make himself thoroughly acquainted with the system which he was to overthrow. We will give what he himself relates of it in one of his letters. "Amongst the Indians there are three classes of distinction, and these comprise the nobility. Each of these is subordinate one to the other; and all three ground their claim to distinction on the most fabulous absurdity. The Bramins hold the highest rank, because they pretend to have sprung from the head of Brama, their god; an extravagance which reminds one of the ancient poets, who affirm that Minerva issued from Jupiter's brain. However

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ridiculous this origin of the Bramins may seem, it is so fully credited, that they are the most considered of all the Indian races; they boast that they alone are noble, wise, and learned, and hold themselves superior to any sort of manual occupation, confining themselves to the worship of their deities, to the decoration of their temples, to the augmentation of the revenues of their Pagodas; or if they do sometimes quit the sphere of these religious occupations, it is to regulate the civil and military departments. They persuade themselves that these important functions belong exclusively to them, as being above the reach of any other class. But of all their duties, that of which they are the most tenacious is the perpetuating the fables which gave them authority, and to blind the credulity of the people on these points, which so materially affect their own interests. The Rajahs form the second class of nobility; they are the grandees of the kingdom, but are inferior to the Bramins, because they sprung from the shoulder of Brama. As for the third order of nobility, the members of which are styled Chusters, they owe their origin to the leg or foot of the divinity. This class is very numerous, and is divided into a multitude of others, which are all held as honourable. Those who compose this class may attend to mercantile pursuits, to agriculture, and to the manufacture of cloth. From this class too, are drawn their warriors, tradesmen, and, in general, all those who exercise the mechanical arts. Each degree of this class has its privileges and limits; no one can quit his own rank or condition; he is

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irrevocably bound to it. The fate of birth decides a man's occupation for the rest of his days, and is precisely what his parents have been before him; the son of a white-smith can never become a goldsmith. The Parias are excluded from these three classes; separated from the ordinary habitations, they are obliged, like lepers, to live beyond the circumference of the towns and villages; it is a dishonour to admit them into one's house, to visit them, or to eat with them; to do either of these things would expose one to the degradation of losing caste.

Two years after Father De Britto arrived in India, a curious incident occurred at Travancor, with regard to the Parias, which shows how completely they are abhorred by their countrymen. Some Bonzes undertook to expel all the missionaries, and resolved to persuade the king to consent. To accomplish their purpose, they added the temptation of gifts to the vileness of calumny. Seduced by the arguments of these impostors, the prince was on the point of publishing an edict of perpetual banishment against the Christians. The arrival of the brilliant presents, would, no doubt, completely decide him; they were conveyed with great pomp; but Parias were employed to carry the precious load; no sooner did they enter the outer court of the palace, than a cry resounded on all sides of "Parias in the palace! Parias in the palace!" Hereupon, the guard, soldiers, and servants, rush forward; blows of staves and lances are showered on the poor unfortunate Parias, who throw down their load, and seek safety in flight.

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The presents were received, nevertheless, but they went through the ceremony of purification first. The king was indignant at the temerity of the Bonzes, and the Christians were spared. However vile and odious this portion of the Indian population may appear in the eyes of men, it is exceedingly numerous, and well suited to follow the teaching of the Gospel. The missionary effects more conversions here than among all the other sects. There are amongst them men of letters, who are held in repute, and who possess the secret of the "Grandonic" tongue, the mother-tongue of all the dialects spoken in India. The Parias are likewise well skilled in medicine, and whatever may be said of intercourse with them in every other respect, they are summoned and willingly admitted, as soon as illness requires their aid. Such is prejudice, which often disappears when a pressing personal interest is strong enough to outweigh it.

The opposition which noble Indians showed to anything of intimacy with the Parias, did not slacken Father De Britto's zeal in the work of their conversion. Without neglecting the despised class, he strove with great ardour to disabuse the Bramins, and win them from their errors. Notwithstanding their susceptibility on the subject of the Parias, he did not deem them unworthy of the blessings of christianity, when once they abjured the absurd belief of their presumed origin; when they refused to recognize Brama or any other idol as the object of their homage; and when, in fine, they gave public proofs of their sincere renuncia-

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tion of all idolatrous worship. In this, he did but second the views of the Church, which, until then, had permitted certain concessions in their regard, provided that before their baptism they showed themselves entirely detached from all superstition.

The hereditary repugnances of the Indian nobles, with regard to the lower orders, were not, in Father De Britto's opinion, obstacles wholly incompatible with the Christian faith; and he judged thus, not only because the Holy See had consented to tolerate their mode of thinking on the subject of castes, but likewise, because he hoped by degrees to dissipate these prejudices by means of the doctrine and practice of the gospel.

For a long time the same principle of action was followed up in France with regard to certain popular usages. In some of the provinces, notwithstanding the profession of a very pure belief, certain ranks or professions were excluded from the common rights of civil and Christian society. Either from an effect of national prejudice, or natural aversion, all those who followed these professions were looked upon as people with whom it was impossible to associate without dishonour; they had even houses and churches separated from the towns; could only form alliances amongst themselves, nor dared they quit the sphere of their own condition. Pastors tolerated this, because they did not believe that it prejudiced the spirit of Christianity, knowing that our Saviour did not come to change the ranks and conditions, as then existing in the world, but to save souls, and draw all men to Himself.

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Father De Britto studied to instil into the higher castes a due sense of charity towards the lower classes, and in several places succeeded in uniting them all together in one common enclosure, under one and the same pastor. It was only in a certain number of cantons or territorial divisions, that prudence induced him to avail himself of the consent of the Holy See,* and tolerate the separation of the Parias, in the manner observed at his arrival. He was compelled to follow this plan in a few places. He informed himself thoroughly as to all these customs, and then, without detriment to religion, he used them judiciously for the benefit of souls. In proportion as he converted the Bramins, he studied to undeceive them, and correct their misconceptions with regard to the fable of their divine origin; nor would he baptize any of them till he was satisfied that they sincerely renounced all the chimeras of paganism. His meekness and charity soon gained him the esteem and confidence of the most distinguished people of the country, and a circumstance occurred which served materially to accredit his mission. A contagious malady broke out and carried off a great number of his most fervent Christians. He neglected no means of solacing all who were attacked; he procured for them both spiritual and corporal remedies, watching constantly by them night and day; he observed a compassionate precaution to preserve those free who had hitherto escaped the contagion; all became the occupation

* Vide Bull of Gregory XV.—1623.

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of his zeal and of his tenderness; he overcame all these fatigues, and was preserved from the malady, until at length his prayers and tears arrested its further progress. The pastor seemed to have multiplied himself, making himself all to all, in the midst of his desolate flock. Heaven recompensed him, by multiplying its blessings on this depopulated territory, now left almost without Christians. In a short time Father De Britto had the satisfaction of seeing it again peopled with a multitude of neophytes, who replaced those whom he had lost by the pestilence.

He had another opportunity for exercising charity. Those circumstances were most precious to his heart which enabled him to promote the happiness and tranquillity of his neighbour; this was his special attraction, and he followed it up with ardour. Madura is infested with serpents, and other venomous reptiles and insects; the sting, especially of the former, conveys a mortal poison, the effect of which is prompt and certain. Many of the natives daily perished in this way. Father De Britto was deeply grieved at these incessantly recurring accidents. He had brought with him some little stones from Malta, to which (according to common opinion, and confirmed by experience), God had attached the cure of those who had been bitten venomously. He aroused the confidence of his people, by reminding them of the miracle wrought in that island in favour of S. Paul; and assuring them that the Almighty would give the same recompence to their faith, if they made use of those stones at the

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approach of the serpents; moreover, in their presence he justified the truth of his assertion. He desired one of the Christians to hold out one of these stones steadily in the face of an adder that was rushing towards him with fury and impetuosity; the man at first held out his ring to the enraged reptile, which only aggravated its fury; but as soon as he fastened the Maltese stone to the ring and presented it, the adder instantly expired. This event increased the faith amongst the Indians, and gained great success to the instructions of their apostle. But Father De Britto made no other use of the credit with which Heaven sustained his ministry, except to render venerable to the idolators, the name, the law, and the power of that supreme Author of all the wonders which he effected; like the Apostles, who, when honoured with the power of working the greatest miracles, looked upon themselves as nothing more than feeble instruments employed by Omnipotence, for the honour and for the establishment of the faith of Jesus Christ. Their faithful imitator never swerved from this duty, rendered moreover so familiar to him by his deep sense of humility. The more our Lord was pleased to honour his ministry by the prodigies he effected both in souls and bodies, the more eagerly did he strive to turn to the glory of religion all the honours which people tried to force upon himself. Dead to all things, he had but one interest, which was so exclusively his own, namely, that of seeing Jesus Christ known and adored in all places.

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BOOK II.

Father de Britto was labouring indefatigably in cultivating the Lord's vineyard; his labours were much augmented by the deplorable condition to which his flock was reduced. The country was laid desolate by the plundering excursions of a horde of wild Indians, who perpetrated every species of cruelty and disorder. Souls were exposed to extreme danger by the continual and obstinate persecutions raised against the faithful. Territories were ravaged and left uncultivated, none of the inhabitants having courage to bestow care and toil, which they foresaw would be useless, and their loss inevitable, whenever the savages should choose to make their next assault. It was with difficulty that the people could protect themselves against surprise, even in the very centre of the colonies. Father De Britto shared the affliction and misfortunes of his dear neophytes. Anxious as to the result of the miseries they underwent, he saw with grief that the edifice of religion seemed on the verge of ruin. This is what occasioned the misfortunes of this little Christian population. The celebrated Rajah Siwagi then reigned in Madura. After winning over a number of rebels to his party, he threw off the Mogul domination, and took up arms to assert his own independence. He put himself at the head of the malcontents, everywhere raised new

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troops, and increased his army by admitting into it vast multitudes of brigands and thieves, who cared only for plunder. He burnt and ravaged the whole country as he traversed it; and the better to keep up his revolt, he made himself master of the fortress of Ginghi, the stronghold of the kingdom to which it gives name; it is situated at the top of a very rugged mountain, though the spot on which it stands is vast, fertile, and convenient for habitation; consequently, everything may be found there necessary for a long and vigorous defence. The approaches to it are almost inaccessible, nor can it be reached otherwise than by narrow and circuitous roads, whose issues are in immense forests, where places of concealment are numerous, in case of any sudden attack. Siwagi foresaw all the advantages accruing from the possession of this important place; he besieged and took it, partly by valour and partly by stratagem. For two years all the forces of the Mogul were unable to dislodge him, in effect, the troops of that powerful prince were obliged to purchase their retreat with heavy sums, or they would have perished miserably in the mountain ravines which surrounded them. Notwithstanding this success, the rebel was convinced that ultimately he should be compelled to yield to the numerous troops sent by the great Mogul, under the orders of the governor of Golconda. They had already found means of approaching the fortress, which would infallibly have been taken by assault. Siwagi abandoned it, therefore, and dispersed his forces through the

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plains in all directions. He required provisions and succours, both of men and money, to keep up his rebellion. The most sanguinary violence and barbarity were his usual resources. He entered territories, pillaging them, and committing every species of excess; he ravaged the fields, destroying the harvest, and compelling all the natives he met with to take up arms in his train, everywhere leaving vestiges of the most unheard-of cruelty.

In these distressing circumstances Father De Britto found himself obliged to abandon the Ginghi mission, and withdraw in all haste to the college of Tanjaor; but here he could find no place sufficiently spacious to accommodate all the Christians who had followed him: at length, however, a spot was discovered at some distance from the college of suitable extent; and here they constructed a chapel, at the distance of about half a league from the river Coralam. Scarcely was the building completed, than on the eighth of December the river suddenly overflowed in the middle of the night. In the course of three hours the waters accumulated in an alarming degree; dykes were broken up, and other torrents combining with the already vast body of water, inundated the whole country. The chapel was soon surrounded, and there was no possible egress from it. Sixteen Christians were praying in it at the time with Father de Britto. As soon as they heard the billows dashing against the walls they cried aloud, and gave themselves up for lost. The water soon forced its way into the chapel in all directions: the floor was soon flooded; for the Father had in

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vain attempted to check its impetuosity by trying to throw up a rampart of earth and stones inside the little building. The rampart was soon broken down at the part nearest to the door; the water rushed in, and they were all on the point of being drowned. Providence, however, watched over them. Father de Britto, with the crucifix in his hand, exhorted them to place their confidence in God, and pointing to a wood at some little distance where they might find shelter, he bade them follow him thither. But how were they to get there? There was every prospect of perishing in crossing to it. God directed them to make use of some joists and planks which the waters had not yet carried away. They quickly bonnd them together somewhat like rafts; and, guided by their firm hope in the protection of Heaven, they attempted to reach the spot indicated by the Father, and they succeeded, though fresh trials awaited their faith. The inundation soon reached the wood, where they flattered themselves they would have been safe; moreover, they were without provisions, and had eaten nothing for three days: to all this was added another danger; the serpents, disturbed and alarmed by the waters, crept about in all directions, surrounded our little troop, and terrified them with their hissing. They were kept at bay, and many of them were killed, thanks to the little Maltese pebbles; but as fast as one set was driven back another advanced; and the numbers increased so formidably, that the Father and his associates could only expect to perish, either by the inundation, or the stings

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of venomous reptiles. They had already prepared for death, by contrition and the accusation of their sins. In the midst of so many subjects of alarm, the Father remained undismayed, sustained by his confidence in God. He bade one of the Christians cross over to the ruins of the chapel, and bring back a small provision of rice which had been left there. In spite of the risk he obeyed, and swam back in safety with the food which Providence had reserved for their relief. At length, after undergoing much distress, the pastor and his little flock had the consolation of witnessing the return of calm weather; the waters retired, and the flood-bound prisoners were able to return to what was once their home; the inundation had left them nothing but a few ruins. At this sight, his gratitude to the Divine protection was all the more lively; prostrating himself before God, in the midst of the rubbish, he returned most grateful thanks, and with streaming eyes, besought Him not to turn His propitious looks from this small newly-formed band of Christians, and not to permit hell to triumph over souls redeemed with His blood, and won to His Gospel.

Father De Britto's prayer was followed by a special benediction. Several nobles of the country invited him to go and choose a more favourable asylum in their territories than the one from which they had been roughly expelled. He had gained their good-will by his affability, meekness, and charity; he had even gained them so far as to have instructed them in the principles

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of the Christian religion, but he could not confer baptism upon them, on account of their inveterate attachment to polygamy. This is one of the chief obstacles the missionaries have to contend with, and it is with difficulty they can succeed in removing this, even when they have surmounted all the others.

The father thanked these princes for their obliging offers, but he preferred residing in the midst of his Christians, to a more easy home among an idolatrous people. He undertook to rebuild his chapel and residence, and worked at it so perseveringly, that he was able to use it for the Christmas solemnities; the concourse of people was very great. Father De Britto celebrated the holy sacrifice with that tender devotion so peculiar to himself; he had suffered exceedingly whilst unable to say mass, a duty which he never omitted except in illness, captivity, or some circumstances which led him to apprehend sudden incursion on the part of the enemies of the faith.

Notwithstanding the poverty of the new building, everything passed off with a piety which supplied the place of riches in the house of God. The fervour of the numerous flock consoled the missionary for the excessive amount of toil so recently inflicted on himself, for the inundation had not entirely ceased until the 17th of December.

The pastor, ever master of his own heart, did not relent in the functions of his apostolate, although he experienced many contrarieties in it. His continual change of residence, and the in-

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clemency of the elements, so incessantly conspiring against his enterprises, never slackened his resignation to the appointments of Heaven, nor his constancy in carrying on the work of God. He applied himself without relaxation to the conversion of the idolaters, and to the sanctification of the Christians. His chief distress was caused by the sight of the calamities produced by the ravages of Siwagi, which often rendered it impossible for the faithful to congregate in fixed habitations, and from raising churches, in which the holy sacraments could be administered. But in the midst of so many trials painful to his zeal, Almighty God indemnified him from time to time by the most consoling events, such as the following.

A youth, sixteen years of age, had been instructed in the Christian faith; after spending about six months in teaching him all that was thought necessary, and after witnessing his ardent desire to receive baptism, the father promised to confer it upon him. His parents employed promises and threats alternatively, to dissuade their son from his salutary purpose; they did not succeed; he resisted all their efforts, and was baptized. Soon afterwards he fell dangerously ill; some imputed his illness to the poison conveyed by baptism, others proclaimed it to be the leprosy which he had caught by the infusion of that water, into which they declared the Christians threw a magical and destructive ingredient. All affirmed that it was a punishment of the gods for abandoning the worship of the pagodas, and

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that he had no other chance of cure, than by abjuring the creed of Pranguys (the name by which the idolaters designated the Christians), and returning to the religion of his ancestors. The sick youth withstood these attacks of hell with most invincible courage, feeling more and more penetrated with gratitude to God for the grace of light and faith, and for withdrawing him from the deplorable prejudices of which his unfortunate family were the victims. Full of confidence in the Divine goodness, he directed his supplications thither, and by the advice of Father De Britto, whose visits animated his courage, he chose S. Francis Xavier for his intercessor, promising a communion and an offering of wax for the altar, if God should deign to grant his cure. The prayer was heard and granted, and in the most sudden manner. During the following night when his case seemed most desperate, and he, as it were, stood on the very brink of the grave, he suddenly arose full of health and vigour, spoke, moved, and walked, as if he had never had an illness. He immediately set off with Father De Britto to the chapel, eight leagues distant, where he fulfilled his vow, received the sacraments, and by the permanent restoration of his health, everywhere published a miracle, which beautifully attested the truth of the faith which he had embraced.

The following incident is another proof of the supernatural results which contributed to accredit the mission of Father De Britto in those countries. And how could it be otherwise than that a harvest

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should daily increase, which was fertilized by the miracles of Divine protection? An idolater fell ill, and in a few days was beyond the power of remedies. Father De Britto was informed of it, but was unable to go to him, on account of a solemn festival, the indispensable functions whereof detained him where he was; however, he sent a Christian, one of the sick man's relatives, over to him. The neophyte was instructed by the father as to the exigencies of the case, and hastened to the house of the idolater: he was much moved by the deplorable condition of his soul; and still more by the evident danger of his immediate death. He spoke to him on the happiness of living and dying a Christian and placing before him all the pressing motives which the missionary had engaged him to suggest, offered to instruct him in all that was necessary to salvation. The sick man, corresponding to the grace which was given him, consented to all that his relative so urgently advised. Whilst the neophyte was exhorting the idolater, Father De Britto was in prayer. God heard the fervour of his supplications, and besides granting him the conversion of this infidel soul, He added a prolongation of his days, fully suffioient for his instructions; the poor man received holy baptism, and soon afterwards expired. At the moment of his death, one of the idolatrous ministers happened to be in the house, and in a transport of astonishment, cried out, "Look there! do you not see light environing that soul as it ascends to heaven? Oh, what brightness!

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what glory!" He repeated the same words several times. The Christians rendered thanks to God for the honour thus shown the faith, even by its enemies; more than thirty idolaters were converted on this occasion; and thus did the mission which Father De Britto governed increase, through the blessings which Almighty God conferred on those belonging to it, and on the neophytes who were daily joining it. We must not enter upon the details of a thousand other wonderful favours which accompanied the toils of our apostolic missionary. We wish these events had been more circumstantially narrated, but unfortunately those who witnessed them were satisfied with briefly stating them, adding, that God granted them through the prayers of Father De Britto. These miraculous powers were especially afforded him whilst he was in Tanjaor, Ginghi, Coleï, Missour and Cotourro. He frequently expelled devils from persons and from habitations; he freed the fields from ravaging insects, cured inveterate disorders, averted storms which threatened to destroy the harvest of the Christians, restored fertility to lands that had long been unproductive, stopped the overflowing of rivers, but what most of all signalises his apostolate, was the conversion of an immense number of idolaters in a few months' time. The truth of his mission was confirmed by this constant succession of marvels, not unlike those which followed the labours of the first founders of Christianity. To make the similarity complete and perfect, nothing was wanting but that the worthy pastor should give his life

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for his flock, and crown his labours, as the Apostles did, by the effusion of his blood. And he had this glory, as we shall hereafter see. Up to his last moment he was a prodigy of constancy in defending the faith, and has deserved all the eulogies due to heroic love for Jesus Christ, and zeal for the salvation of souls.

But Heaven would dispose him for his last combat by many trials and victories. It was no small augmentation of anguish to him, to find himself placed at the head of all the other missionaries; and of course it added considerably to his share of labour and fatigue. He had been several years charged with the mission of Madura, one of the most laborious of the whole Peninsula. He had the consolation of converting upwards of twenty-thousand pagans; proselytes hastened to him from all the neighbouring kingdoms; his reputation for charity and virtue attracted them, and they were then soon convinced by the solidity of his instructions. His new occupation would have required six missionaries, according to the avowal of those who were well acquainted with its laborious details; whereas he alone, notwithstanding his constitutional delicacy, sufficed for all; he even supplied the place of those who were hindered or otherwise engaged; the most fatiguing journey could not deter him; the spirit of God, which animated him, rendered him superior to all obstacles.

This mission is commonly called the Malabar mission; it includes twelve residences, where the Christians of each canton assemble for spiritual

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aid; there are as many missionaries for the benefit of the inhabitants; twenty or thirty might find enough to do, for this portion of Christendom is both flourishing and embraces many souls; we may form some idea of the other residences from that part of Trichinopoli, which contains more than thirty thousand Christians. It is evident that the number of missionaries employed in this extensive vineyard is inadequate to the vast amount of labour required. In effect, to the care and direction of the Christians must be added all that requires so much time, namely, vigilance over, and instruction towards the conversion of the idolaters. To satisfy the many duties of apostolic zeal, and to be in a condition of serving the Church in every conjuncture, the missionaries are obliged to train up, and avail themselves of the services of catechists to aid them in their labour; this important office is not entrusted to them till they have given full proof of propriety of conduct, solid piety, and a perfect knowledge of the Christian doctrine. They are maintained at the expense of the missionaries: and are sent about in all directions to announce the gospel, and to discharge certain functions which the pastors themselves are unable to attend to. It would be impossible to describe the zeal and success with which these fervent catechists acquit themselves of the important charge with which they are honoured. They preach the law of Jesus Christ with great intrepidity in the presence of the idolaters; they unmask the hypocrisy and cupidity of their false teachers; they confound their errors and their most che-

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rished superstitions; they daily multiply the triumphs of truth, by winning new disciples over to it, and they strengthen the recently-converted pagans against the obstinate persecutions with which they are assailed. From year to year we may admire in the annals of the Indian church, some of the most beautiful trials of courage on the part of these faithful co-operators of the gospel ministry. The disputations which they hold with the Bonzes, both in public and private, and the tortures which they undergo for the faith, bear witness to the divine truth that conducts them, and ensures their victory.

Father De Britto felt the full weight of his newly imposed obligations. Although he had toiled indefatigably in the various missions committed to his charge, and though he had often been obliged to traverse whole kingdoms, the office of general superior exacted a special vigilance, a solicitude, and a mind fertile in resources, to be able to maintain the public and private well-being of Christianity in India. The Divine Goodness was pleased to couple with the burthen thus placed on the shoulders of a faithful minister, all the strength that was required to bear it. His duty called upon him to visit all the churches frequently, and he was always able to meet this labour. Twice did he repair to Meliapor, where he spent several days in solitude and prayer, and returned on both occasions burning with new flames of apostolic ardour. He enkindled them on that soil which the great Xavier had watered with his sweat, and, in real

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truth, he must have needed courage not to sink under such an accumulation of toil; what he went through in his journeys alone, demanded the zeal of an apostle; nothing less could have sufficed. He made all the visitations of this vast diocese on foot, undeterred by the excessive heat, or other difficulties of season and climate: the thickly wooded forests, abounding in venomous reptiles, as well as desperate brigands, did not deter him: a little rice, a few vegetables, and the beverage of the poorer natives, was all that he allowed himself under his unceasing labours.

He did not limit his mortifications to the diet, scanty and coarse as it was, peculiar to the various countries he traversed; his love of penance led him to add the most rigorous macerations: he habitually wore a hair-cloth, daily disciplined himself to blood, and everywhere slept on the bare ground. Nothing but the orders of superiors could moderate this continual severity with which the holy missionary treated himself: no sooner did they signify their will than he obeyed punctually, and submitted to whatever they prescribed: he had no other aim than that of becoming the imitator of his crucified God, but he did not forget another point of conformity due to the example of his Lord, Who made Himself obedient even to the death of the cross. From time to time Providence wrought splendid miracles in favour of Father De Britto; and whilst he was interiorly sustained under his excessive toils, so was he wonderfully preserved from the most imminent external dangers; and unexpectedly re-

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lieved in the most pressing emergencies. He experienced the special effect of Divine Providence as he was once crossing the river Corolam. Considerable as this river is in appearance, it is nothing more than a torrent which falls with rapidity from the Gate mountains. It is divided into several rivulets; but in great storms all these streams unite in one, and overflowing the country, cause great devastation. When the inundation is moderate, persons can cross over in a boat which is always at hand; but the men who undertake to ferry it are so rough, and so habituated to the use of improper language, that the missionaries prefer going by any other way: sometimes they swim across the river, or construct a sort of raft; or if they are unpractised swimmers, they carry an earthern vessel of very light material, and hermetically sealed, which bears them up on the water, in the same manner as the European gourd-bottle. One day Father De Britto reached the river's edge in company with another missionary and some Christians; a heavy rain was falling, and night was close at hand, yet they could see no one to convey them across: in the mean time the Father withdrew under a tree to say his office; all at once he heard a voice enquiring whether any one wanted to be rowed over the river. The Father answered in the affirmative, desiring the person to come forward, because there were several waiting for a boat. At the same moment a man made his appearance, and most obligingly offered his services to the whole company; and pointing out a ford at a little dis-

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tance, he led them to it, and then ferried them over to the other side. As soon as they were landed, Father De Britto eagerly turned to thank their charitable guide, but sought him to no purpose; he had disappeared; nor could they gain any tidings of him in the neighbouring village, although they made particular enquiries of those who ought to have recognised the man, from the description given of him. Whether there was any miraculous interposition in the case, or whether it was merely some benevolent man, influenced by charity and anxious to remain unknown, we cannot but admire the merciful care of Providence, who furnished this resource in favour of a faithful servant, or who inspired the man to whom he was indebted for it.

Before we speak of the fresh fruits of benediction which Father De Britto reaped amongst these people, we must give a short sketch of the functions of a Madura missionary; the reader will then better understand the ardent zeal with which the father exerted himself to maintain fervour in all the churches which he governed. He was very careful in his choice of workmen; those whom he employed were most scrupulous in observing all that he had taught them by his example. The following is the rule which he invariably followed in every church, which was placed as near as could be in the centre of the mission. In the first place he omitted none of those exercises of charity called for by the necessities of the Christians. On Sundays and festivals he gave a discourse before mass, always in the dialect of

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the country, which a missionary must know perfectly, before a church can be entrusted to him: psalms and other prayers are chaunted during the celebration of the holy mysteries. The catechists prepare those who are to approach the sacraments, by giving them suitable exhortations. On the principal festivals, when the concourse of assistants is very numerous, nothing is spared that can add to the solemnity of the occasion. On the eve, the sound of trumpets, drums, flutes, and a sort of lute may be heard, filling the air with harmony; pious canticles are sung in tune with the instruments; whilst the ear is thus gratified the eye is no less pleased, and curiosity is excited by a display of fire-works; this is an art in which the Indians excel, and on these solemnities the Christians display all their skill in diversifying, as tastefully as possible, whatever they present in this way to the sight of the idolaters. All this display is made in order to undeceive their prejudices, with regard to the meanness of spirit of the Christian law; but they likewise try to give them an idea of its grandeur and majesty, by representing to them the wonderful concordance of the apparent abjections of its author, with the sublimity of His virtues and of His morality. For this purpose pictures are exposed, both within and without the church, representing the principal mysteries of Christianity; for instance, our Lord in the crib in the midst of shepherds,—the adoration of the Magi,—the most touching circumstances of His passion and death. These are then explained

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to them, dwelling on all that is grand, supernatural, and divine, in these various instances of humility, and in these manifestations of mercy on the part of our God and Saviour. These edifying sights usually produce the most desirable results. Not only do they nourish the fervour of the neophytes, by realizing to their minds the truths they have been taught, but they likewise often make a deep impression on the idolaters, and dispose them to esteem a religion which, by the majestic dignity of its external worship, proclaims the excellence and the spirit of its dogmas. The night preceding the festival is spent in satisfying the eagerness of those who present themselves at the tribunal of penance; often the missionaries are obliged to prolong this labour till morning is far advanced, so that they can scarcely snatch a couple of hours' repose: the Mass is said at a later hour on these great festivals, is conducted with greater ceremony, and there is a much larger number of communicants: it is not over till past midday. The catechumens are then baptized, and water is blessed. One of the customs of the country consists in putting ashes on the forehead every morning; this custom the Indian Christians were taught to sanctify with the remembrance of death, to which the distribution of blessed ashes would materially contribute. In proportion as religion became respected in India, the missionaries studied to perfect its observances, by withdrawing from their neophytes everything that bore even an apparent connection

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with the ceremonies of idolatry. Therefore in conformity with the injunctions of the holy See, they have for some years been strictly forbidden to continue the custom of putting ashes on the forehead: the ceremony is now only observed at the beginning of Lent, according to the ritual of the church. After the instruction and baptism of the adults, a second discourse is given, followed by public prayer; when this is finished the multitudes disperse. The catechists then bring in such of the sick as are able to come or to be conveyed thither, when spiritual and corporal remedies are administered, according to each one's necessity: the toil of these holy days does not end till sun-set, and then the missionary retires. It will readily be conceived that he could not possibly encounter such fatigues if God did not support him by some special protection; moreover, the consolation he experiences at the sight of such well-sustained fervour, and the proofs of holiness of which he is the happy witness, cause him to forget how much it has cost him before he could gather this fruit. He consumes his days it is true, but as they wear away he realizes within himself the consoling assurance, that he returns them to a God who has sacrificed His life for those very souls whose pastor he is. The first journey which Father De Britto undertook in his new quality of superior, enabled him to assist at one of these public solemnities. He shared the toils with the resident missionary, and his zeal was as fully satisfied as it was occupied; he could remain there but a few days, for being

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charged with the care of all the churches, he was obliged to resume his journey and proceed on his visitation. Of all the countries he had to traverse, that of Marava seemed to interest his affection the most; it was his first conquest to the gospel. The whole country was covered with forests, in which the greater part of the natives dwelt; there were but few of them who chose to live in the plains. Shortly before Father De Britto's arrival in this kingdom, a great revolution took place in it, which changed the government. A powerful princess had been long reigning, but at the time she believed her throne to be the most secure, she was despoiled of it by the very man she had herself appointed to be the governor of Marava. She implored the assistance of the neighbouring kings to expel the usurper, who maintained his ground, however, notwithstanding the troops of the king of Tanjaor, his forests rendering him both inaccessible and invincible. Other princes assailed him, but to no purpose; he assumed the title of king, and preserved his authority by a succession of glorious victories. Men do not willingly renounce the prerogatives of a crown, when only just beginning to enjoy them; a usurper would be still less inclined to resign them; the less right he has to an elevation, which flatters his ambition, and which leaves him nothing more to wish for, the more inveterate is his passionate desire to maintain himself in it.

Rebellion has then no crimes sufficient to alarm him. Marava experienced this at the hands of the tyrant whom it had raised; the country was

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desolated by all the evils which intestine war can entail; and such was its position when Father De Britto made his appearance there; the domestic broils which then agitated the kingdom, did not hinder him from sending a considerable number of additional missionaries; who, being dispersed in all directions, zealously applied themselves to the cultivation of this wild rocky soil. The Father's first plan was to draw some of the people away from the dense forests, and induce them to construct habitations more easy of access to those who were anxious to serve them and save their souls. As soon as he converted a tolerable number of them, he proposed his project, to which they willingly acceded; he did still more; he advised them to clear the woods in various places; he himself working with them. He soon had the consolation of seeing numerous Christian populations springing up; and in less than two years he succeeded in establishing a very numerous and flourishing flock; those who composed it seemed to have thrown off all the darkness of error which had so long enveloped them, at the same time that they disengaged themselves from the gloom of their native forests; they joyfully followed, in their new and brighter homes, the heavenly light conferred on them by God, through the ministry of Father De Britto.

Father Gaspar Alphonsus, afterwards bishop of Meliapore, was at this time provincial of the Indies. Moved by the unwearied toils undergone by the servant of God, he recalled him, in order to give him a little time to recruit and gain strength

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after such unwearied exertions. The Father repaired to Topo, and after two months' sojourn there, returned again with a couple of excellent fellow-labourers, Father Jerome Telles, and Father Louis de Mello; the latter was even more distinguished by his exalted virtues than by his illustrious birth; he belonged to one of the most ancient families of Portugal. The three had started from Tutucurim in a small boat, hoping to reach the port of Ostiar in a few days. After making four attempts to prosecute their voyage, they were as frequently driven back; so that they were fifty-four days in accomplishing it. The delay was a trial to them, but they made it an occasion of merit in the eyes of the sovereign master in whose service they were engaged. Father de Mello was given the Marava mission as his share; and he made such progress in it, as soon to draw upon himself the indignation of the usurper. A large troop of armed men were despatched to seize the zealous missionary. As soon as he perceived them advancing towards him, he courageously stepped up to them, and with his accustomed meekness, said, "Here I am: why do you come in such numbers? Are so many soldiers necessary to arrest one unarmed man? You ought not to distrust me. I am in your hands, execute your orders; you can neither injure my soul nor my faith." These words threw the soldiers into such a rage, that without allowing him time to say more, they violently fell upon him, loaded him with chains, and dragged him away into the presence of the persecutor of the faith; who at

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once condemned him to be shut up in one of the dungeons, destined as the preliminary punishment of great criminals. The courageous soldier of Jesus Christ was treated with every sort of indignity. He was next taken out of prison, and fastened to a kind of gibbet, with his legs cruelly bound with iron bands; he was left in this state for several days, exposed to the burning heat of the sun, and to all the insults of the populace; until at last the tyrant, being informed that his innocent victim, the object of so much fury, was apparently at the point of death, and that he could not possibly hold out much longer against such torment, gave orders to have him re-conveyed to prison. The excess of torture to which the father had been subjected, soon reduced him to the last extremity; he watched the approach of death with as much firmness as he had desired it; and being ripe for heaven, at what may be called an early age, he closed his career, a victim of zeal for the faith, and animating the labours of his brethren by his courage. Father De Britto was deeply moved by this loss; but he envied the lot of him who was thus sacrificed by the enemies of Jesus Christ; and he sighed for the blessed opportunity of giving the same incontestible proof of his love for Almighty God. In his holy impatience for martyrdom, he incessantly exclaimed that he would either impart the faith to the people of Marava, or shed his blood for them. Nevertheless, as the persecution was at its commencement only, he thought it his duty to yield to circumstances, and appease the enraged tyrant. Not to expose

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the new-born Christian flock to certain ruin, he assembled them together more cautiously, and even discontinued preaching and catechising in public for some time. Copying the prudent conduct of the primitive church, when the pastors concealed themselves together with their flocks, at the time the persecution was at its height, he secretly withdrew to one of the Christian residences, to allow the storm to pass over. He remained there three months; and then traversed the whole of the country which separates the two kingdoms of Tanjaor and Marava. Here a new field opened to his zeal and learning. On his arrival he received an insolent defiance from certain idolatrous ministers, proud of their erudition, and boasting that they could destroy all his arguments in one single conference. They chose, as the subject of dispute, a point which they believed to be most favourable to themselves; blinded as they were by the fables with which they played on the credulity of the people, and to which they themselves most obstinately adhered. The whole basis of their argument consisted in defending the existence and power of their god Bramah; they pretended that everything, even the thoughts of men, drew their origin from this fabulous divinity. "We could not," said they, "form an idea, express it by words, or execute it in action, unless it were first impressed on the mind by this all-powerful deity; all that he has thus engraven, is so ineffable, and so infallible, that neither he, nor the other three hundred and thirty million of gods, would be able to hinder the effect of it." In

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the midst of all this absurdity, we find the vestiges (though terribly deteriorated) of the knowledge which the Indians at one time had of the true God; either through the preaching of the apostle S. Thomas, or from their intercourse with the Hebrews; or rather, we discover the disfigured remnant of that lasting idea implanted in the souls of men, of one Supreme Being, to whom they owe their homage and their worship; this knowledge, so pure in its origin and so pure at the time of the first man's creation, has degenerated amongst the Indians and other idolatrous people, owing to their general corruption of manners; this corruption has passed from the heart to the mind, and has covered it with darkness. In the midst of this blindness, however, man could not entirely destroy the idea of God, and of the worship due to Him; but he has obscured and disfigured it, by forming various phantoms of religion, such as would not inconvenience his passions. He has substituted in the place of truth absurdities suited to his perverse inclinations; and has constructed for himself a monstrous composition of fable and impiety; he has built it on the basis of truth, which he has rendered unrecognizable; and though he has been unable entirely to destroy within himself the natural impress of the divinity, he has adopted that which is utterly incompatible with a belief in the true God. Thus the idolatrous Indians connect with the idea which they still retain of one supreme divinity, a worship most absolutely in opposition to it; for not only do they believe in a plurality of gods, and revere an incon-

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ceivable number, but they moreover impute crimes to them, which, so far from gaining them respect, render them deserving of the horror and execration of mankind.

The Indians acknowledge one special divinity invisible to all, and envelope him in such a multiplicity of veils as cannot possibly be penetrated. They have three other gods more palpable and corporeal, namely, Bramah, Vishnou, and Xivah. The first is, as it were, the father of the other two, to him they attribute creation, preservation to the second, and destruction to the third; the whole system of Indian idolatry bears upon the worship of these three deities. But their religion is chiefly divided between the two sects of Bramah and Vishnou; Xivah has but few followers, and they are so decried for the horrible corruption of their principles and morals, that they dare not publish their infamous mysteries, or acknowledge their attachment to them by any public act of worship. These three sects, but especially the two first, are in constant opposition one to another. They tear each other in pieces, and wage an implacable war against one another; the inevitable fate of every human belief which dares to contradict a religion stamped with the seal of the divinity.

The boasted wise men of the sect of Bramah came forth and impudently attacked the modest missionary, saying to him, "How darest thou flatter thyself with the idea of teaching new dogmas to us, since there is nothing which thou canst say or think of thy religion, which from

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the birth of the world has not been engraven in the mind of every man by the god Bramah? No! there was no need of thy boasting of thy doctrine, as of a law of truth unknown to us previous to thy arrival, for our chief divinity imparted it to us, and wrote it in our brain long before you appeared amongst us."

This was, in effect, acknowledging that the first man, and all who succeeded him, had a natural idea of the divinity. The father, however, did not insist on this consequence, so easily to be inferred even from their fabulous principles. He contented himself with asking them on what foundation they rested their decision in favour of Bramah? "On the opinion of all our learned men," they replied, "and therefore we need give no account of such incontestible principles." "But," pursued the father, "do you believe that your god Bramah can lie?" "No, certainly," exclaimed they, "and it would be a crime to think so." "Nevertheless," rejoined the father, "there are two famous sects here, terrible enemies of each other; the one perpetually contradicting what the other affirms; according to you, Bramah is the author of all your ideas, therefore, he must write contradictory thoughts in your minds, consequently he lies, either in those who belong to his party, or in those who oppose it. The truth cannot be on both sides at once; it is folly, therefore, to believe as you do, that your god Bramah writes on the brain of every man. Own, rather, that your god is really an impostor. However, since,

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according to your opinion, it is a horrible crime to say that he is an impostor, I have a right to believe what I advance, and if you will but listen to me, you will easily be inclined to think as I do. For, let me ask you, is this proposition of mine, which is so offensive to you, stamped on any brain by your god Bramah, or is it not? If he has given it me, he must have written within me that he himself is a deceiver; if the idea is my own, and my own only, it must be the effect of my natural faculty of thought; and if so, why not allow as much for all the rest of our ideas? Reject this chimera, and a thousand others of which you are the willing dupes, and submit to the dogmas of a religion which alone is pure and true."

The adversaries of Father De Britto being thus confounded, could only answer by railing and coarse insult; this is usually the impotent resource of partizans of error and falsehood; when forced to yield to the convincing authority of truth, they borrow the arrows of satire and calumny, as a last means of defence; thus they strive to elude the reproach, and to avenge the shame of their obstinacy. This was precisely the conduct of the Bonzes after their defeat, towards their successful opponent, who, for his part, deemed himself all the more honoured by their outrages, whilst the Christian religion became all the more respected. If the idolaters, stung by the humiliation they had just experienced, became more and more obstinate in their prejudices, at least, the new and old pupils of the

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faith derived therefrom the consolation best calculated to confirm it. They suffered much from the cruel persecution of Paleas, then governor of the revolted territories. He carried his fury against the Christians to an excess of which idolatry alone is capable. He had them banished from society as men infamous, and degraded from the common rights of family; they were reduced so far as only to be allowed intercourse with the Parias, a portion of the Indian population considered utterly despicable. They submitted to this opprobrium with the most admirable constancy, and not one of them flinched from his duty. All deemed themselves happy in being the victims of humiliation for the sake of Jesus Christ, and were willing to sacrifice their lives for Him. Their position, however, was exceedingly trying; they had scarcely any of the aids requisite for the construction of their dwellings or the cultivation of their land. They could not publicly exercise any craft, either mechanical, commercial, or agricultural; every profession forbidden to the Parias was closed against them, nor were they admitted to any of the privileges and distinctions of the higher castes. As we have already remarked, the Indians are not suffered with impunity to quit the sphere in which they chance to be born, or which may have been fixed upon them by way of punishment. The two following circumstances occurred during the persecution raised against the newly converted Indians.

A gold-refiner of Maseilapatan married, and

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on his wedding-day, would, with a display of vanity unsuited to his state, be carried in a palanquin through the streets. A palanquin is a very comfortable sort of litter, used by the higher classes when they travel. A carpet is spread over a mattress and cushions, the whole surrounded by a sort of frame-work, open, excepting at the top, which is covered either with silk or woollen stuff, ornamented with gold or other fringe, according to the taste of the owner; a roof covers the whole to protect the occupant from the rays of the scorching sun. This hanging-bed is fastened to poles, and carried on the shoulders by men hired for the laborious service; there are either two or four bearers, according to the length of the journey. They generally run, but step so equally, that those who are in the palanquin experience no fatigue. It was in an equipage of this description that our gold-refiner thought proper to traverse the city. A volley of insulting shouts and raillery followed him; threats of indignation accompanied him wherever he went; a mob next assembled and stopped the palanquin in which the newly married couple were seated. A complaint was lodged before the tribunals, they even took up arms, and twenty thousand men came forth to demand justice against the rash man who had dared to assume an honour so far above his rank. In fine, to put a stop to the tumult, the gold-refiner and his wife were arrested, and were sentenced to a punishment proportioned to their crime. They were condemned to sweep the

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whole length of the road which they had passed over in their palanquin. This decision satisfied every one, inasmuch as it seemed to maintain due right of rank.

Another similar instance occurred about the same time, but terminated in a manner much more disastrous to the offender, and more profitable to the Bramins. A principal personage in a neighbouring town had committed a crime which degraded him from his degree of nobility. Ashamed of his degradation, and of seeing himself mingled with the lowest classes, he resolved to regain his forfeited honours by purchase, no matter what the cost might be. Proposals and offers were made to the Bramins, the judges of such cases. The circumstances seemed favourable to the cupidity of these mercenary ministers; they at once assembled, and spent some days in deliberation, and at length decided, that, for the expiation of the fault, for maintaining the honour of their sect, and for the restoration of the petitioner to his former prerogatives, it would be obligatory upon him to present a silver cow to the temple, and to remain shut up within the statue for several days in order to purify himself, after which he should resume his forfeited rank. The fallen man did not hesitate to accept the proffered condition; he joyfully submitted to all that was required of him. The Bramins reaped the profit of their own adjudication, dividing the spoil amongst themselves; but they would have been still better pleased had the cow been of gold, an atonement which they often inflicted

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on offenders, when they presumed their finances to be in a state to bear such a fine.

This little digression will be pardoned, as not being wholly irrelevant in the life of Father De Britto; it gives an idea of one species of suffering to which he was reduced together with his dear neophytes. Reduced, as they were, to a level with the caste of Parias, they had to endure not only the opprobrium of the state, but likewise the pressing penury of it. They could no longer apply themselves (in public at least) to any of the respectable professions, because they were limited to the higher castes exclusively. Persecution deprived them of this advantage, as well as of the succours which they had previously derived from their families, or such as they might have obtained in their own country. It would have been rashness in them, nay, according to the laws of the country, they would have exposed themselves to punishment, had they attempted to regain any of their former prerogatives.

Whilst the idolaters were attaching dishonour and chastisement to the Christian religion, the Christians, on the other hand, were honouring their faith by their fervour and intrepidity. The oppressions, however, to which they were subjected, and the difficulty of procuring so much as the merest necessaries of life, determined Father De Britto to remove them from that province. Whilst they were looking out for a new asylum, better suited to their religion and to their birth, Heaven took up their cause, and protected them most signally.

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The governor, who was their enemy, because he was the enemy of Christianity, was cut off by sudden death; and soon afterwards two of his wives perished in a fire. Peace was thus restored to this Christian population.

From time to time Heaven was pleased to strengthen the authority of the pastor in the midst of his flock, by means of striking chastisements, similar to the above related. In one colony where the missionary was dissatisfied at seeing the Christians dwell promiscuously amongst idolaters, as being dangerous to the purity of their faith, he exhorted the former to build separate dwellings for themselves. They were deaf, however, to the pressing remonstrances of their pastor; nor were they long before they felt the effects of their obstinacy. Lightning struck all their cabins and burnt them, leaving those of the idolaters untouched. This event stimulated and encouraged the zeal of the father, but did not as yet make sufficient impression on some of the Christians, who still showed reluctance to a change of locality; but the father predicted that before the expiration of the year, they would have to pay the penalty of their perversity, for that the lightning would again fall upon their houses. The threat was soon verified, and one of the most obstinate of the Christians perished. It was but very seldom, however, that the father used such threatening language. In dealing with his neophytes, he generally followed the impulse of gentleness and kindness, so natural to him. He spoke to them in such tones and terms of affection

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as to win over the most obdurate; he consoled and assisted them in all their troubles. A shepherd easily guides his flock, when he seeks his sheep with patience, collecting them when they stray, and not discouraging them by the bitterness of too severe reproof. This paternal tenderness was always Father De Britto's guide in the functions of his ministry; it was engraven in the deepest recesses of his heart, and it enabled him to triumph over almost insuperable difficulties, especially when the perseverance and salvation of his dear children were in question.

He wandered from kingdom to kingdom to extend the conquests of the Christian religion, and to preserve himself for the sake of his flock, the destruction of which was held as certain when once the pastor was destroyed. Sometimes he announced the gospel in Tanjaor, sometimes in Ginghi, then again in Madura, from whence he would pass on to Golconda. Once he came upon the track of robbers, which obliged him to seek concealment in the thickest part of the forest; and here he discovered a convenient place to collect the Christians, which he did; and hastily raising an altar in an oratory of shrubs, he covered it with branches, and spent several days there, preaching and administering the sacraments to the faithful, who flocked in crowds to hear him. Private and retired as the spot was, it was impossible to conceal it from the enemies of the faith, who collected in great numbers, armed themselves, and resolved to fall upon him unawares and take away his life. He was forewarned of their plans, with-

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drew, and once more defeated their furious projects. Father De Britto had much to suffer on this occasion; he had scarcely any food, and risked his life five times in crossing rivers; but his final sacrifice was reserved to the cruelty of the people of Marava. He sighed for the moment of re-entering that country, and advanced towards it with all the eagerness that charity could dictate. At length Almighty God so disposed of circumstances as to facilitate his return thither; and here, in truth, he found a career worthy alike of all his zeal and of all his courage. For the Regulo (a title given to those noblemen whose rule extends over several cantons of one and the same province) was still persecuting the Christians with unabated severity.

Such of the missionaries as could easily be recognized, were obliged to abandon the country. Catechists supplied their place in their absence, and did their utmost for the consolation of the Christians. Father De Britto was of opinion that they ought no longer to be left without the chief succours of religion, become more than ever necessary under the trials of persecution. He, therefore, little terrified by the threatening danger, visited his desolate flock, thinking that so perilous a mission ought to belong to the superior, rather than to any of his members. No sooner was his arrival known, than numbers of neophytes hastened to him, and he was obliged to spend both day and night in exercising the functions of his apostolic charity; he had but few short intervals to devote to prayer and to snatch a little rest.

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The harvest corresponded with the labour. After administering the sacraments to a great number of Christians, he baptized two thousand seven hundred catechumens, whom the catechists had prepared in the absence of the missionary. Father De Britto spent two months in these important duties; but whilst he was joyfully collecting these fair fruits, hell, jealous of the conquests thus gained over it, rekindled the fury of the persecutor against him who was defending the faith both by his toils and by his example.

The father was traversing the rural districts of his mission when he fell into the snare which had long been planned for him by the commander of the royal troops. This was owing to the malice of the Bonzes, who, by their intrigues and accusations, were perpetually inciting the hatred of the Regulo against the Christians. The father was accompanied by six of his neophytes at the time of his arrest. No sooner was he presented to the chief officer, than he had to undergo all the outrages which spite and rage could dictate to the tyrant and his satellites. He was treated as a magician,—as one guided by the evil spirit, the author of the new creed which he was promulgating. To this audacious accusation, he gave but one short and modest answer: "The law that I preach," he meekly replied, "is the law of the true God, of that supreme and Almighty Master who Himself taught it to us. It is not man's invention; neither is it the work of the spirit of darkness, as you assert." The commander-in-chief did not answer him, but noticing

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a catechist named Valentine, he inquired who that man was? The people cried out that he was the declared enemy of the gods, that he perverted the whole province, by striving to introduce the new sect into it: at that instant, the officer in a rage gave orders that he and the other Christians should be put to the torture. They were stripped, beaten with rods, and struck with heavy iron chains. Lacerated, and bathed in blood, they lay extended on the ground, feeble, and in such a state of suffering as presaged approaching death. But God rendered them superior to the force of pain: they uttered not a complaint, whilst serenity of countenance bespoke the peace that was reigning in their souls. During their torments, they were several times offered liberty, on the sole condition of their invoking the god Xivah, but they resolutely refused, declaring that they would give their lives a thousand times rather than betray the faith of Jesus Christ. Enraged at these instances of Christian magnanimity, the tyrant himself attempted to shake the courage of the generous catechist: he spoke to him in private, he alternately employed threats and promises to induce him to renounce the true God, but the faithful follower of Jesus remained immoveable. The general thought he should succeed better in corrupting the flock, when once he had perverted the pastor; he therefore summoned Father De Britto, and after many insulting reproaches, he ordered him to be most ignominiously stripped, and desired them to sprinkle his forehead with ashes consecrated to

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the idols, in testimony of his respect for the Pagodas. The father abhorred so detestable a proposition. The officer in a fury threatened to have him torn limb from limb, and to despatch him with blows: "Oh!" exclaimed the father, in a transport of joyful ardour, "when shall I have that happiness?" One of the officer's relatives hereupon struck his face; the father calmly presented the other cheek; but this example of evangelical meekness and patience only served to aggravate the tyrant's rage. He ordered the missionary to be thrown into a dungeon, and left to the mercy of a set of soldiers as barbarous as their chief. The father received the most inhuman treatment on his road to the prison, but triumphed over it with his usual noble equanimity of soul. The first day of his imprisonment he was loaded with heavy irons, lest he should escape by magic, of which he was accused. Notwithstanding this cruel precaution, the guards were not without uneasiness. On the following day they bound his hands behind him and fastened him to a large pillar. As for the six neophytes, they were subjected to the most dishonouring and the most cruel tortue peculiar to the country; their legs were pressed between two cross-beams of wood, and in this state they were left the whole day exposed to the burning rays of the sun, unable even to change their position. This first combat served but to give new lustre to the generous devotedness of the defenders of the faith, whilst at the same time it increased the provocation of their enemies.

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On the fourth day, the persecutors tried a new species of torture, namely, that of water. They led Father De Britto and his companions to the brink of a pond, fastened a cord under the arms of each of them, and then plunged them into the water, leaving them in it just long enough to suffer all that could be endured short of suffocation, and then dragging them from time to time to the surface, only to plunge them again to the bottom. Up to this point, every one of the heroes remained invincible; but, as if to render their fidelity still more vigilant in the midst of so much supernatural protection, God permitted one of them to betray the cause, and give up under his torments; he begged the executioners to withdraw him from the water, and release him; he gained his liberty, but he lost his faith.

The crime and the scandal of this defection was more painful to the generous troop, than all the tortures they had previously endured. The persecutors promised themselves great advantages from this event, so well calculated to make an impression on the rest of the Christians, and slacken their courage. Their expectations were deceived; the faithful combatants seemed but the more nerved against all feeling of fear, and against the sensation of their sufferings. Father De Britto was treated with a greater refinement of cruelty than the rest; he was left longer at the bottom of the water, he was kicked about, and exhibited to his companions at the moment he was in the most pitiable condition, in hopes of terrifying them. Once amongst other times, he was left so long in

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the water, that he was on the point of suffocation, but the faith which sustained him throughout his torments, became his defence in this danger ; he implored the aid of Heaven, and at that very instant he rose to the surface, experiencing such an accession of strength and vigour, that he seemed as if he had yet suffered nothing ; new torments, however, reduced him so nearly to death's door, that his very tormentors felt obliged to desist.

On the following day, the commander-in-chief and his troops quitted the spot they had for some time been occupying, and which he had signalized by his barbarity against Father De Britto and the Christians ; by way of triumph he caused his illustrious captives to be dragged along in his suite. The father and his neophytes were quite exhausted by the sufferings so recently inflicted on them by the pagans.

The missionary especially was unable to walk, his feet being most fearfully swollen. His condition awakened the commiseration of one of the idolatrous soldiers, who was charitable enough to lend him his horse, and thus convey him in comparative comfort to his journey's end.

But if the head was thus spared in order just to save his life, the enemies of the faith made up for it abundantly at the expense of the catechist Valentine, whom they most inhumanly treated on the road. He patiently suffered both their invectives and blows, contenting himself with saying to them, "If I were mad I should do what you require of me, but since God preserves me my reason and my faith, I would rather die a thousand times than be wanting in fidelity to Him."

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The prisoners were compelled to travel on foot during the greatest heats of the day, without stopping, and almost without food. At length, they arrived at a famous temple of the idols, and this furnished a new occasion for tampering with the faith of the catechist. The commander called him, made him magnificent promises, and assured him that he would load him with honours and wealth, if he would only renounce the disgraceful sect of the Christians. "My Lord," replied the generous catechist, "reserve your riches and dignities for others; there are none able to flatter me, but those which I expect in dying for my religion, for which I would gladly shed the last drop of my blood; yes, I am ready to give it for that God who has deigned to immolate Himself for my salvation; behold my heart! drive your dagger into it, never shall you ravish it from the master to whom I have given it!"

This answer aroused the fury of the commander and his satellites; the intrepid catechist was seized, loaded with chains, and beaten without mercy and without respite. He was laid flat on the ground, then stretched out on a sharp surface of rocks, and there scourged; and, at length, thrown into a deep ditch with the father and the four other Christians. Here they remained for two days in great misery, surrounded by a set of merciless soldiers, who refused them the most necessary relief, and assailed them with the most injurious language. Idolaters of the country hastened to have a peep at their enemies, and insult them. Father De Britto's captivity

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was especially gratifying to their rage and their revenge. Nevertheless, however tranquil he might be under his own sufferings and chains, endured as they were for the love of Jesus Christ, he was far from easy on the score of his dear neophytes; he understood that the fear of persecution was on the point of dispersing them. From the recesses of his prison he found means of restoring tranquillity to his little flock, and of raising its courage. One of the Christians had obtained permission to carry a few necessary articles to the prisoners. Father De Britto availed himself of this circumstance for the benefit of the others; he bade him go and console them in his name, and encourage them to stand firm in the faith. "Assure them from me," said the charitable pastor, "that God will protect them, and that if they die for Him, He will award them an eternal recompence for their sufferings and sacrifice." This assurance had its full effect on the hearts of his neophytes; they were strengthened by it, and had the courage frequently to present themselves at the doors of the prison, bringing rice for the sustenance of the captives; but the guards divided amongst themselves all that was given in this way for the father and his companions, who only received a few remnants, more likely to disgust than to relieve them.

On the twelfth day the tyrant ordered the prisoners into his presence, where there was a bloody display of the instruments to be employed in their torture. Some of these were thrust into a furnace and drawn out red hot, when the

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father and his Christians were threatened with immediate application of them to their persons unless they abjured their religion. Animated by the Spirit of God, the heroes gazed with intrepidity on all these preparatives, and so far from being terrified, they declared that all attempts upon their faith would be useless. They longed for death, equally despising threats and torture; each one eagerly pressed forward in hopes of being the first victim immolated. The spectators were astonished, but remained unconvinced, notwithstanding so many circumstances which ought to have opened their eyes to a belief of the power of the true God. The tyrant deferred the execution till the morrow; he was waiting for orders from the Regulo of Marava, whom he had apprized of the detention of Father De Britto and his companions. The intrepid band believed the term of their combats for the faith to be now at hand, and that their last day was at length arrived. They were ready for death, and were soon informed that the tyrant had condemned them. They were drawn out of prison, chained together in couples, and led to the village of Paganari, where sentence of death was read to them, with a promise at the same time of being restored to life and liberty, if they would but present their adorations to Xivah; whereas, if they persisted in their obstinacy, they would experience the full measure of royal indignation. Their only answer was the same as that already so frequently reiterated. The only complaint of the father was, that their happiness

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and glory was so long delayed. At these words a soldier advanced, and tried to pour profane ashes on the holy man's forehead, but such was his resistance, that he was unable to succeed, whereupon he flung him to the ground and loaded him with blows. The others were treated with scarcely less cruelty; their hair and beards were torn away, they were kicked and trampled upon, dragged over stones and brambles, till they were actually weltering in blood. Valentine was so cruelly used, that one of his eyes was forced out; notwithstanding all this, he courageously underwent the water trial a second time. On coming out of the pond where he had renewed the constancy of his courage for the faith, he was brought directly opposite Father De Britto, and one of the executioners said to the latter, "Look at that miserable wretch, he has just lost an eye; try whether you can restore it." "I envy his lot," replied the father with modest assurance; "Ah, why cannot I give my life in the same cause!" The tyrant was told that it was mere loss of time torturing the disciples so long as the master was spared; he begun then to concentrate the whole power of his fury upon the father; he flung him down at his feet, had him beaten with clubs, and after tying his hands behind him, caused him to be rolled down a slope studded with sharp flints. After this torture he was left exposed to the burning sun, all covered as he was with wounds and blood. An idolatrous Indian, in spite of the threats of the soldiers, succeeding in drawing him to a

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spot a little more sheltered. A violent storm coming on, the magnanimous athletes were reconducted to prison, and again loaded with heavy fetters. Unmindful of his own sufferings, the father thought only of soothing those of his companions; he reminded them a thousand times of the tenderness of the Master whom they served, of His fidelity to His promises, and of the certainty of their eternal recompence. These little exhortations, accompanied as they were by all that was most moving in a lively and affectionate confidence, served more and more to perfect a faith already so well tried, and so perseveringly maintained. They were still more confirmed in it by an event which seemed somewhat miraculous. They revered Father De Britto as a saint, and there was not one of them who did not attribute to his prayers the grace of invincible fortitude with which they had hitherto been favoured. This impression of veneration excited the hopes of the catechist, that through the father's intercession with Almighty God, he might recover the use of his recently destroyed eye. Full of this consoling idea, he called Father De Britto's attention to his bleeding socket, begged him to raise his hand and make the sign of the cross upon it. The humble servant of God knelt down in prayer in the midst of his little troop. After reminding them of the miraculous cures granted to the faith of those who, when suffering from disordered eyes, had confidently invoked S. Lucy, he and they appealed to the intercession of this blessed martyr; then approaching Valen-

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tine, he touched his eye, and blessed it with the sign of the cross. On the third day after this the eye was restored, and he could see as well with it as with the other, that had never been injured. The report of this cure, so utterly unlooked for, was soon circulated. The ministers of idolatry could not deny that it was most extraordinary, but in their prejudice they ascribed it to magic; and the only result it led them to, was the expediency of putting such dangerous men to death as soon as possible. They were sentenced to be empaled, a punishment only inflicted on the vilest and most despicable of criminals. At this news the soldiers of Jesus Christ were transported with holy joy; they mutually congratulated each other on the happiness they were so soon to enjoy, and in eagerness of being the first to reach the place of execution, they seemed, as it were, to dispute with one another for the glory of carrying off the first crown. All who were present, and even the idolaters, admired this holy emulation. The latter were obliged to own that men so courageous in vindicating their faith could not be deserving of death. There were several who went so far as to cry out that they ought to be restored to liberty. The tyrant yielded to the shouts of the multitude, and sent the prisoners off to Ramandabouran, the capital of Marava. The hour for the final sacrifice of these illustrious victims was not that which men had ventured to determine. Heaven reserved the flock, as well as its pastor, for other trials, and for another theatre on which to consummate their offering.

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The fatigue of the new journey brought an addition of merit to Father De Britto; his feet again became swollen and wounded, he was heavily fettered, and was also suffering from fever. On his arrival, he and the five Christians were thrown into prison, strictly watched, and treated with as much rigour as in the other places of their captivity. On the ninth day he was brought before the Regulo. On receiving the summons, he supposed his last hour to be at hand, so he bade his dear children a most affectionate farewell, and promised not to forget them in the abode of all mercy, if Almighty God should deign to admit him into it, by granting him the favour of dying for the faith. He embraced them all, and exhorted them to fight courageously to the last for the love of Jesus Christ.

His interview with the Regulo did not bring about the happy issue he had so long been wishing for. Instead of the sentence of death which he expected, he received every sort of honour. As soon as he appeared, the prince rose and bade him be seated close to himself. This was in presence of the whole court, composed exclusively of idolaters, so that the circumstance was all the more glorious to the Christian faith. The honour bestowed upon its minister redounded to itself, and threw all the more confusion on its enemies. The Regulo asked the father whether it was he who taught the new religion, against which the Bonzes were embittered? The intrepid missionary replied, "It is I who have the honour of discharging that sublime function.

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I preach the doctrine of the true God, of that omnipotent God who alone deserves the homage and adoration of all men. To this Eternal and Supreme Master alone ought we to offer the worship of our hearts and acts, and not to such gods as are created by the prejudices and the credulity of blind mortals."

The prince was struck with the generous answer of the Father; he admired him, and praised his courage: he then questioned him more in detail on the teaching of the Christian religion. Father De Britto began by explaining the ten commandments, dilating on the wisdom and grandeur which distinguish them, of themselves sufficient to announce their divine origin. The Regulo appeared delighted with the explanation, and could not help saying that this law must be considered a most excellent and accomplished rule of moral conduct. The Father, seeing the respect and attention with which he was listened to, proceeded to develop various other subjects of the Christian belief; giving a clear idea of the excellence and perfections of the Supreme Being; explaining His chief attributes, His justice, power, mercy, immensity, His providence, His unity, His wisdom and intelligence. The Regulo interrupted him several times, asking divers questions on the great truths which the missionary was unfolding. The Father threw all requisite light upon the subject, with such docility and mildness as to delight the prince and his whole court. After two hours' conversation the Regulo asked him whether he was a Pranguy, or whether he was a Dutchman,

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because he judged from his complexion that he was a foreigner. The Father replied, that he belonged to a Society of learned men, whose object it was to teach the law of the true God throughout the world in quality of His ambassadors; that there was no reason why that Society should not be respected as much in his dominions as in other kingdoms, in consequence of the dignity of the ministry confided to it. "But," interrupted the Regulo, "is the faith which you preach professed by all the people dwelling beyond the sea?" "Yes, prince," answered the Father, "the whole world has embraced this pure creed; it is everywhere taught. As it is obligatory on all mankind, it is not limited to the instruction of one single nation; it proclaims to all the fidelity and docility which all men owe to their Creator." The interview ended with the same demonstrations of honour which had greeted the Father at his introduction. "Go," said the Regulo to him, "I esteem you as the true and sincere master of your religion!"

The respectful consideration shown by the Regulo to the Father made the enemies of the faith foam with rage; they loudly complained that the Pranguy would not so much as pronounce the name of the god Xivah. The Regulo's son likewise expressed his dissatisfaction on the subject; but the Regulo silenced his son and the Bramins, by reproaching them with the preposterous fables of their sect, and by telling them that what they had just heard ought to have taught them how to distinguish truth from falsehood. Who would not have supposed the Regulo disposed to embrace

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Christianity? Alas! the purity of the Gospel terrified the passions of which he was the slave: moreover, a corrupt system of policy was joined to the depravity of his heart. Instead of yielding to the truth, so clearly manifested to him, he forbade, under grievous penalties, all attempt to propagate the very creed which he had just learned and praised. He had surrounded himself with a multitude of idolatrous rebels; and he feared that if he protected Christianity, he should forfeit their aid, so necessary to the preservation of his usurped authority. He permitted the Father to remain in his kingdom, provided he did not teach the new religion; he even threatened him with a most cruel death in case of disobedience. He took leave of him, however, with marks of great distinction, and gave orders for the liberation of his companions. The official did not obey the orders of the Regulo; he still detained his captives. The Father had returned to his companions in chains, so that he was unable to make any complaint to the court under a delay which prolonged their captivity. He could speak to no one without the permission of the guardian of the prison; a man completely addicted to wine, and so degraded by debauchery, as quite to forget the injunctions he had received from the Regulo with regard to Father De Britto and his companions. At the end of about three months they were able to remind him of the prince's orders, and they were set at liberty. The first object which the Father then proposed to himself, was to gain another interview with the Regulo, and work upon

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his good-will. Gratitude for recovered liberty dictated this in the first place; but his principal object was to prevail on the prince to modify his prohibition against the preaching of Christianity: yet, by an equitable dispensation of Providence, the Father was unable to accomplish his desires. God had offered the means of conversion to the unfortunate Regulo; libertinism and political interests induced him to refuse these pressing and advantageous offers of salvation; and he was punished by a fatal persistance in his blindness. Divine Justice did not allow the minister of the Gospel to find means of obtaining another interview, or enable him again to press upon the Pagan that light of truth against which he had hardened himself, although he had acknowledged that it deserved his submission.

In effect, Father De Britto was recalled by his superiors to Topo, the head house of the Cochin Province. Father Emmanuel Rodriguez was then governing it; and he deemed it his duty to do all he could towards re-establishing the health of a minister so precious and useful to the missions as was that of the Father. The whole of Indian Christendom seemed interested in the preservation of his days. The provincial detained him for a few weeks; and after this short interval of rest, painful, we may say, to the zeal of the fervent missionary, he permitted him to return to his former labours. He had only accomplished a few days' journey, when he was recalled to the house he had just quitted. The morning after his departure from Topo, Father Rodriguez received in-

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telligence of the shipwreck and death of Father Francis Paës, who had been deputed to Rome as Procurator of the Indian missions. His ship struck and foundered on the coast of the Cape of Good Hope. He was saved in a boat, but died on his journey by land, exhausted by excessive fatigue, sufferings, and privations but little suited to his advanced age. No one seemed better suited to replace him than Father De Britto, and he was elected to the post previously assigned to Father Paës. The man of God drew no comparisons between the great good which he was doing in the Indies, and the apparently unimportant duty now committed to him. He hastened to obey, leaving the Supreme pastor to take care of the souls which had been entrusted to his guidance. He proceeded to Goa, and set sail from thence to Europe, at the beginning of the year 1688, and arrived at Lisbon towards the end of the same year.

BOOK III.

On the arrival of the vessel at Lisbon, Father De Britto repaired to the college of S. Antony, when the most distinguished persons in the city hastened to congratulate with him on his return after so long an absence and such arduous toil. He was questioned on every subject connected

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with his residence in India. The father submitted to this importunity, because it gave him the opportunity of practising mortification. The better to manifest his sanctity, and the labours to which his zeal had exposed him in the course of his missionary duties, Providence so permitted, that just before he disembarked, the letter which he had written from the prison of Marava to his provincial, had reached Lisbon and been pretty well circulated: it contained the whole detail of his persecutions, as already related, though not so circumstantially for what concerned himself; his humility making him reserved on the subject of his own sufferings. No sooner was the city in possession of a man, revered as a glorious Confessor of the Faith, than noble and plebeian, high and low, were all eager to see him, and show him honour. Father De Britto was not aware that his letter had been forwarded to Europe; nevertheless a great number of copies had been taken of it, a circumstance tending to increase the feeling of universal veneration in his regard. After resting a few days, he asked an audience of their Portuguese majesties, who had already heard of his return, and were anxious to see one who had so gloriously served religion, and who had honoured his country by trials worthy of the most magnanimous defender of the faith. He easily obtained access to the palace. Gratitude to the king for his zeal in promoting religion in the Indies had induced the father to solicit this favour, for he considered it one of his first obligations to bear the respectful homage of all the mis-

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sionaries to the foot of the throne. The king and queen received him with marked distinction, nay, even with veneration: the king, who had known him in his youth, and who had seen him depart to the Indies with evident regret, was delighted at his return. After honouring him so far as to embrace him several times, he would himself conduct him to the queen's apartment. This princess welcomed the father with all the consideration due to the minister of Jesus Christ, and to a man whom she revered as a martyr. She had already conceived the highest esteem for his virtues, and was fully convinced of his influence with God. The better to realize the effects of it within herself, she would have the consolation of assisting at his Mass, and of receiving holy Communion from his hand. Father De Britto repaired to the chapel of the palace, and gratified the confidence and piety of her majesty. Honoured as he was at court and throughout the city, the humble priest was not the less disengaged from all that could have flattered any other heart but his own. His continual mortification corresponded with his penitential appearance; he still wore his poor Indian missionary's dress; whilst his life, so truly apostolic, did but set off the edifying exterior under which the apostle betrayed himself. His food consisted of vegetables and a little rice; he never touched wine, slept on the ground or on a plank, or sometimes a bear-skin extended on the floor of his room served him as a bed. The papal nuncio one day invited him to dinner. Respect would not allow him in this instance to

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adhere to his inviolable rule, of never taking a meal out of the college; he therefore accepted the honour of this invitation, without, however, being obliged to swerve from his austere diet. The prelate had provided for him precisely what was pleasing to his spirit of penance, nor did he press him to partake of the other dishes.

As soon as Father De Britto had acquitted himself of his first duty of gratitude and respect, he devoted himself to the obligations imposed on him as deputy from the missions of Malabar; his chief object was to collect missionaries for those vast regions. It was requisite that those who were looking forward to these laborious functions should combine piety with a robust constitution, and aptitude for the acquisition of languages. On this combination of qualifications of soul and body, did the father insist chiefly in his choice of subjects. He repaired to Coimbra and Evora, two celebrated academies, where he judged it most likely he should meet with workmen suited to his purpose. No sooner did he appear than a crowd of zealous students offered themselves to the distant missions. The details they had heard of the persecutions which Father De Britto had undergone for the faith, and the admirable conversions he had wrought amongst the Indians, aroused all the ardour of those edifying youths. Many went to him with tears in their eyes, and prostrating at his feet, besought him not to deny them the favour of sharing his apostolate: labours, privations, persecutions, immense and continual fatigue were all placed before them in their

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most appalling colours, in order to try their courage, but nothing could daunt them. Father De Britto, however, did not think proper to accede to the fervour of all who offered themselves; he at first accepted but six out of this vast number of proselytes; they were finishing their course of theology, and had, moreover, the requisite talents. He gave the rest time for further consultation with God, and for qualifying themselves the better for so difficult an apostolate.

Father De Britto did not, however, limit his selection to these six students: he was joined by some other missionaries, whose well-tried abilities could be made available, as soon as they reached Madura; some of them had occupied, and with great distinction too, chairs in the most famous universities of Portugal. The esteem they conceived for the holy missionary made the same impression upon them as upon the young students; they eagerly entreated superiors to be allowed to accompany the fervent priest. Their request was granted; and though Europe might thus be deprived of some most excellent masters, it was deemed advisable to waive this consideration in favour of the still greater good to be effected amongst the infidels of those distant countries; they were specially destined to labour in the conversion of the Bramins, the sect most difficult to convince. To ensure anything like success, extraordinary application and an immense depth of learning are requisite, to triumph over the multiplied artifices under which those false doctors shield themselves. It was this motive that induced

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Father De Britto to include in the number of his recruits, a few ministers able to help him in this great work; their capability fitted them for prompt service in his new mission.

Heaven could not possibly favour his desires more effectually than by giving him worthy work-fellows, able to second the ardour of his zeal. He profited by the interval previous to their departure, in order to form his companions to all the ministries they would be called upon to exercise; concealing from them none of the trials to which they would be exposed; he animated them, too, by a view of the advantages attached to this slow and voluntary martyrdom. Like a skilful master, he studied beforehand the characters of those who enlisted under his banner; and before they had completed the voyage, he had already decided the destination of each one, in the way most advantageous to their own souls, and to the importance of the functions to which they would be appointed. Solid virtue is the basis on which the whole life and conduct of a missionary must rest. Filled with this maxim, to which the practice was ever inseparably joined, both in his heart and acts, Father De Britto perfected the zeal and fervour of these new imitators of his sacrifice, by his useful instructions: this was one of his most cherished occupations, up to the moment of his arrival with them in the Indies.

Every morning at the end of meditation, he assembled them, and gave an instruction on the principal duties of the ministry they were about to devote themselves to in the Indies. Three times

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a week he sent them to serve in the hospitals, generally accompanying them himself; on the other days they dispersed themselves through the different churches of Lisbon, to teach the catechism to little children. On Sundays and festivals, besides confessions, which occupied the greater part of the morning, he and his companions spent the afternoon in the neighbouring villages, announcing the word of God to the poor country-people. Under this excellent master they all made their apprenticeship to the apostolate; and in the sequel, they all proved worthy disciples and faithful imitators of their accomplished master.

Father De Britto having increased the number of his workmen for the Madura mission, had now to provide for their subsistence. Those already engaged in the mission had barely sufficient for absolute necessaries, being obliged to divide the little they had with their catechists. The paternal foresight of the superior of the missions was brought to bear upon the sad effects of this scarcity of temporal and pecuniary means. In the situation to which the missionaries were reduced, there was every prospect of their being compelled to abandon several countries, because they had not wherewith to support themselves. Providence provided for them by means of Father De Britto, during his stay in Lisbon; the king was pleased to augment the magnificent foundation which his predecessors had instituted for the Indian missions, by an additional revenue, in favour of the Madura mission in particular: he placed it under royal protection, and always spoke of it as a source of heavenly blessings upon his family and kingdom.

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Father De Britto had intended to proceed to Rome, to give the Father General an account of the Malabar missions ; indeed, this had been one of the chief objects of his journey ; but he was either detained in Lisbon by royal authority, for his majesty loved him as a friend, and revered him as a saint, or some other circumstance now unknown, prevented the accomplishment of his purpose, as he did not visit Italy. He prepared, therefore, to return to the Indies, where Heaven was hastening to award him the palm of martyrdom, after which he had been sighing from the moment of his entering upon those missions.

During his residence in Lisbon he had frequent occasion of giving information on whatever he had observed as most curious amongst the Indians: minute inquiries where made on various topics, and he was able to satisfy all eager inquirers with regard to the natural history of those remote countries. The desired information chiefly concerned the pearl fisheries, the diamond mines, and the writings of the Indians. His information was carefully collected, and has been freely made use of in the accounts of India which have been given to the public: it is but just to own that most of this information was gained in the first instance from Father De Britto, who ought consequently to have the honour of it. We will give a sketch of it here, as detailed by himself.

The fishery coast is thus named because the Maravas who inhabit it are chiefly employed in fishing for pearls. Their skill in this respect sur-

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passes that of any other people in the Indies, and it is a source of wealth to the whole coast. S. Francis Xavier instructed them in the dogmas of the Christian religion, and they all profess it in the full purity of belief, as the Church prescribes. Protestant ministers have often attempted to seduce them, but unsuccessfully. The inhabitants of the coast are as staunch Catholics as they are fervent Christians, as is shown by the following incident, related by the father to a nobleman in Lisbon. A minister belonging to the pretended-reformed Church, but ill-informed of the opinions of the natives of the Fishery, made his appearance amongst them, and dogmatised in favour of Calvinism, flattering himself that he should easily triumph over the simplicity of the unsophisticated divers; one of whom, indignant at his invectives against the holy Roman Church, checked him with this generous transport of zeal: "Thou art very audacious to come here and attack our common mother; let us see thee raise the dead, as our apostle did; then perhaps we may abandon the faith which he taught us, and follow thine. He did not drag about along with him a wife and children. Is that thy creed? we will have nothing to do with it. Our teachers are not distinguished by any such characteristic." The minister was ashamed, and withdrew, having no hopes of gaining people so well grounded in the true faith. Father De Britto felt a special affection for the Christians inhabiting the coasts of the fishery; there was such an ingenuous simplicity, and such fervent piety amongst them, as

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always to afford him very sensible consolation. He seldom passed a year without visiting them, and each time he confirmed them more and more in the exact practice of whatever S. Francis Xavier had taught them; above all things he recommended them never to set out fishing for pearls, without first using all the precautions prescribed by the Church, to persons in danger of death. They were docile to this piece of important advice, having recourse to confession on the eve of the day they were to embark on their precarious avocation. It is a custom which is still* religiously observed, and is much insisted on by the successors of Father De Britto.

But to return to our subject. Fishing for pearls is thus accomplished; the divers launch out their boats, then fasten a cord round their waist, and a stone to one of their feet, a small net hangs from their neck, and thus equipped they fling themselves into the sea and dive rapidly to the bottom, the stone attached to the foot promoting their descent; they shake it off, however, as soon as they reach the bottom. They then gather up all the shells they can as rapidly as possible, and when they have filled their net, they give a sign to be drawn up again. This signal consists only of a piece of string, of which one end is fastened to the diver's arm, and the other is held in the hand of one of his companions in the boat. If this signal is not promptly attended to, the poor diver would risk suffocation in the

* It must be remembered that this was written in 1746.

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water, or he might be devoured by one or other of the monster fishes which but too often pursue him. As soon as the men are safely lodged in the boat, their first care is to expose their shell-fish to the sun, when the shells open, and the pearl enclosed within is extracted.

Diamonds are found in the kingdom of Golconda; they are drawn from the earth, and very frequently people are obliged to dig to a considerable depth before they gain the object of their search. It is only the natives who can distinguish the diamonds when first dug up from the common stones, so closely do they resemble them, whilst still in an unpolished state. The Indians employed in these works make a sort of agreement with their employers. When they bring back any diamonds, the rate of payment depends on the number of fathoms they have to excavate, counting from the surface of the ground down to the soil wherein the diamonds are found; if the poor workmen discover none, they have all the labour and trouble for nothing; they receive no pay.

In fine, Father De Britto satisfied curiosity on the subject of Indian books. The literati the most esteemed are those who are best versed in the mysteries of the Grandonic tongue, the mother-tongue, as it were, of the Indies: its grammatical principles and rules are preserved on leaves of the wild palm tree; they are engraven with an iron stylus, the impression of which is still uneffaced after the lapse of several centuries. This mode of writing is followed by the Indians beyond

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the Ganges, and even by the people of Pahang, Siam, and Camboya. Their books are thus formed; they tie some of the leaves already spoken of together, the leaves being previously written upon; they are threaded on a small cord, until there are sufficient to make a moderately thick parcel; the whole is generally inclosed within two thin pieces of gilded wood or ivory, richly carved; each leaf is written on both sides, but what is written on the back of the leaf does not follow that which is on the preceding page. On opening the book, each leaf is read on one side, to the end of the volume, and then they return to the back of the first leaf, and go successively through the inverse sides of all the leaves. For common writing they use a sort of silk paper, as in China, on which they write with a pencil, though sometimes they write with a stylus on small palm leaves, over which they throw a black unctuous powder which dyes the letters. Several of these Indian books were preserved in the libraries belonging to the colleges of the Jesuits and of the foreign missions at Paris.

Such is the substance of the information imparted by Father De Britto, on the subject of the natural riches bestowed by Providence on the Indies; but he was far more anxious to direct attention to the riches of grace which Almighty God was continually making manifest in the midst of those various populations. The instances of Divine mercy over the new Christians of Madura, which he so feelingly dwelt upon, were not intended merely to gratify an idle and useless curiosity.

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The zeal for God's glory which animated him in these recitals, often produced corresponding effects in the hearts of those who heard him: he lost no opportunity of introducing remarks calculated to touch European Christians, and remind them of their duties of devotion, by the example of the fervent piety which then reigned in those remote regions. One day as he was relating in the midst of a large assembly, various traits of constancy exhibited by his neophytes during the sanguinary persecutions of Malabar, he noticed that a young nobleman present seemed extremely restless and uneasy; the father, however, continued his edifying discourse, thinking it best not to betray any surprise at the behaviour of the young man; but no sooner was he returned home than the nobleman alluded to reached the college. Bathed in tears he flung himself at Father De Britto's feet, who affectionately enquired the cause of this proceeding, as well as of the lively sorrow which seemed to penetrate him. "Ah, father!" exclaimed he with redoubled sighs, "you see before you the most lax of Christians. For these three years grace has been urging me to break my bonds asunder, but a wretched human respect hinders me; I dread what the world will say, and I fear I should not have strength to withstand its censure; I have abandoned every practice of religion; I speak and act according to the dictates of a set of false friends, and I am powerless against irregularities which my heart condemns, whilst I seem to approve of them by my unworthy adherence to them. What you have

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related of the Christians in India completes my accusation. I would gladly escape a thraldom so dreadful to my conscience; and since the world is my ruin, I must quit it for ever, so I am come to beseech you to enroll me amongst the number of those who are to fight under your banner for the conquest of souls." Father De Britto blessed God for the pious sentiments with which grace had inspired the young man: he eagerly strove to confirm them in him by such advice as was best calculated to animate and sustain his courage; nevertheless, he would not all at once consent to his separation from the world, he would have him try himself by leading a life of exemplary piety in it, remitting him to the spiritual guidance of an enlightened director. Father De Britto's advice was attended to, and led to the happiest results. His proselyte entered the Society of Jesus two years later, and devoted himself to the Indian missions, where he died, after having fulfilled all the duties of a perfect minister of the gospel.

Of the many practices of piety exercised by Father De Britto during his sojourn in Lisbon, one of the most distinguished was his tender devotion to the Mother of God. He passed no day without recommending the salvation of his dear Indians to her, or without reminding her that they were souls redeemed by the blood of her son; souls that might implore her protection at the throne of mercy. He fasted and practised other austerities in her honour every Saturday. Anxious to extend the devotion of the faithful towards this powerful

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mediatrix, he exhorted sinners to place their confidence in her, to obtain the grace of sincere conversion; and he proposed her to the just as the model they were to keep in view, in order to strengthen and perfect their virtue; it was on this rule that he had drawn up the plan of his own progress in a spiritual life. To his other daily practices of piety he added that of copying one of the virtues of our Blessed Lady. He looked upon the innocence of childhood as best suited to honour the purest of virgins, and on that account undertook the instruction of the young scholars belonging to the congregation erected in her honour. He superintended it a whole year, impressing on the hearts of its members such sentiments of confidence and piety as their engagements required. Devotion to our Blessed Lady was one of the most familiar practices of his missions; he zealously instilled it into his neophytes, and desired his catechists always to carry pictures of our Blessed Lady about with them to distribute among the new converts; this was a custom he himself never omitted; he always had with him a picture of her, and another of the Apostle of the Indies, as he testifies in one of his letters to a Jesuit of Pondicherry: "I beg as a favour that you will send me the picture of our Lady, given me by Father Superior, and likewise the picture of S. Francis Xavier, for I wish to have these pictures as the companions of my travels; next to Jesus Crucified they are my greatest treasures."

During the latter part of Father De Britto's sojourn in Lisbon, he was frequently summoned to

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the Infanta Isabella Louisa. This young princess had been declining for more than a year, and in spite of all the resources of medical skill, she fell into a consumption, which was gradually carrying her to the grave. She was aware of her own danger, and faced it with Christian fortitude, and with sentiments impressed on her by the example given by her dying mother, Queen Mary of Savoy, seven years before. The Infanta appreciated the merits of Father De Britto, in whom she placed extraordinary confidence. She requested her confessor, Father Pommereau, a French Jesuit, to summon the saintly missionary to the palace. Father De Britto obeyed, had an interview with the princess, and was edified by the dispositions in which he found her; her patience, resignation, disengagement, and total sacrifice of all worldly greatness, were subjects of admiration to him, and to all who approached the royal invalid. Father De Britto was constantly with the Infanta during the last five weeks of her life, and had the consolation of seeing her expire like a truly Christian princess, after sustaining her with his holy instructions up to the very last moment.

The time of Father De Britto's return to the Indies was drawing nigh; and he was preparing himself with a holy impatience to resume the duties of his dear mission; but the king, who honoured him with favours, and even with his confidence, had an idea of retaining him in Portugal; he had experienced the Father's discrimination in several affairs, on which he had done him the honour to consult him, and he could not make up

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his mind to lose a man whom he deemed so necessary to himself; the monarch had more than once signified his opinion and his wishes on the subject. The missionary remained unmoved under all the representations of royalty; he had recourse to Him, who holds in His hand the hearts of the masters of the world, and, shielded by this protection, he conjured Don Pedro not to oppose his departure; he entreated him, in the name of a mission which was loudly reclaiming him, a mission which his majesty had just honoured with the most signal proofs of his benevolence. The piety of the monarch yielded to the entreaties of the father; he had zeal enough to sacrifice his personal interests to the welfare of the faith in the Indies, and he granted the father permission to go whithersoever the glory of God and the salvation of souls called him. This was in the year 1690.

The day for the departure of the fleet was fixed. A great number of vessels were to start together, and separate at a certain point, according to the destination of each one. At the moment when Father De Britto flattered himself that he had overcome every obstacle that could delay his departure from Lisbon, Heaven again put his resolution to the trial. He went to the palace to take leave of the king and queen; their majesties designedly prolonged the interview, reiterating a thousand times their expressions of regret at losing him. To their numerous assurances of kindness and protection, they added a long detail of spiritual and temporal necessities, earnestly recommending them to his prayers; they would present

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the whole of the royal family to him, requesting the holy man to give a special blessing to each of the young princes; in the meanwhile, time was running on, yet the courtiers, in imitation of their majesties (whose object on the occasion was well understood) adroitly followed one another in devising schemes for the longer detention of the father; he perceived the manœuvre, and in fear of missing the opportunity of setting sail, he slipped away suddenly from the palace, and hurried down to the beach in hopes of finding a boat to convey him to the fleet; but the vessel had weighed anchor, and was sailing steadily forward under the auspices of a favourable wind. In his embarrassment, the father looked round in every direction, in hopes of finding some resource, at last he espied a Leghorn frigate bound in the same direction as the fleet; he embarked on it, and as it was a swift sailer, he soon overtook the merchantman, on board of which he was to proceed to the Indies. Nothing could exceed the delight of the other missionaries, who thought they had lost him; a sacrifice which had cost them many tears. They felt the necessity of having so excellent a guide in the dangerous career they were entering upon. All the ship's crew testified equal joy at the sight of Father De Britto. They looked upon him as the guardian angel of the voyage, which was prosperous in every respect. They soon reached Mozambique, and finally landed at Goa.

Father De Britto was received with all the eagerness and with all the demonstrations of joy due to his exalted merit. There had been some

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fear lest Europe should refuse to restore him to the Indies; the delight at his return was therefore proportioned to the previous apprehension entertained by a people to whom he was so inexpressibly dear. His return was celebrated with festive rejoicings. The seminarists of Santa Fè came forth with musical instruments to meet him on landing, and for several days he was regaled with concerts of spiritual music, to amuse and solace him after the fatigue of his voyage. He was looked upon as a recovered treasure, of which India well understood the value. It was natural that youths who were destined to follow him in his career, should testify their satisfaction in the possession of one who was to be their model.

The seminary of Santa Fè was established at Goa by S. Francis Xavier. A number of chosen youths were educated in it, and trained to all the functions serviceable to religion; the house was governed by Jesuits. The new comers from Europe who are destined to the missions, generally remain some months there to learn the dialects of the various countries to which they are to be sent; it is likewise the asylum to which they repair when their labours have impaired their health. In its charity it welcomes all nations. From whatever country a missionary may arrive, it is sufficient that he is a missionary to be secure of a cordial welcome there. Father De Britto spent some weeks at Goa. As soon as he was in a condition to continue his journey, he set out to join the provincial of Malabar,

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to give an account of his voyage to Europe. When he had arranged all his affairs, he was nominated visitor of all the missions of Madura. This new charge exposed him to fresh toils, on which account it was willingly accepted, though, in other respects, the distinction was extremely painful to his humility. He proceeded first to Pondicherry, where the French had a considerable establishment; he was anxious to discharge a debt of gratitude towards some of the most influential inhabitants of the city, by thanking them for the alms and other benefits bestowed upon the missions. He knew the obligations they were most specially under to Mons. Martin, director-general of commerce, whom his most Christian majesty had recently ennobled in reward of his services. He was a man of acknowledged merit, respected even by the enemies of France. Father De Britto therefore tendered to him, and to all the chief citizens of Pondicherry, the due expression of his gratitude, and thus attached them so closely to himself, that they became his staunch friends and protectors in matters relating to the propagation of the Gospel. The French at Pondicherry showed him particular consideration and beneficence, whilst he, on every occasion, both then and later, testified his love and respect for France. Wherever he appeared, he was sure to gain esteem, affection, and confidence; and, indeed, he received every sort of honour in this city. His solid and affable virtue won all hearts, and the Jesuits of Pondicherry still congratulated themselves on having enter-

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tained so inestimable a guest. He spent but one month amongst them, yet during that short interval he edified them as much by the piety of his conversation as by the austerity of his life. Severe only to himself, he was all sweetness and charity to others.

At length, pressed by his ardent desire for martyrdom, he set out for the mission towards which his heart had so long turned. God gave him a sort of foreknowledge of the happiness awaiting him; he spoke of it frequently, and always, like a saint, suffering from the continuation of his earthly exile. His zeal increased in proportion as he neared his term. During the last eight months that he was able to labour in Madura, he baptized eight thousand catechumens; like the sun, whose disc is never larger or brighter than when on the point of setting.

War was still waging between the kings of Madura and Marava. The father suffered extremely in the various changes of locality to which he was obliged to subject himself. Troops were ravaging the country, so that he and the Christians who accompanied him were compelled to conceal themselves in the woods. He remained thus for four months, during which God was pleased to solace his sufferings by granting him the conversion of a great number of infidels. "I am," said he, in one of his letters written at this time, "like an exile here; I have been living under a tree for the last four months, yet God enables me by His grace to lead many pagans to the knowledge of the Gospel." Father

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De Britto, however, quitted his retreat, and entered the kingdom of Marava. A circumstance favourable to religion determined him to take this step. Whenever a precious opportunity presented itself to his zeal, no danger could terrify him. At the present moment there seemed a chance of seconding some good dispositions which grace had imparted to Prince Teriadeven, the legitimate heir of the principality of Marava. The Rangadaneven family had usurped it from his ancestors, and were actually in possession of it. Teriadeven was seized with a dangerous illness, which in a few days was declared beyond remedy. The prince had often heard of the wonderful cures produced by the book of the Christian doctrine; accordingly, he called for a catechist, and, full of confidence, bade him recite the holy gospel over him. He listened to it with respect, and relished the lecture. God blessed his confidence and restored his health. At that very moment the prince became conscious of the favour he had received, and felt that he owed it solely to a Power superior to all human aid. He thought he could not better mark his sense of the prodigy than by sending for Father De Britto; it would be showing esteem for the doctrine, the simple reading of which had been so salutary to him. The father yielded to the solicitations of Teriadeven. After discoursing with Father Boucher, a fellow-missionary, on the excellence of martyrdom, and after dwelling with tender effusion of heart on this subject, he set out on his journey, and reached the province of

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which Teriadeven was governor. He celebrated the festival of the Epiphany amidst a large assemblage of Christians, and conferred baptism on two hundred catechumens. The prince witnessed this edifying spectacle; penetrated by the moving terms in which the father addressed the neophytes, with the devotion shown by the new Christians, and with the majestic decorum accompanying all the ceremonies of baptism, he begged to be allowed the same favour; but the father, who was aware of the extent to which he carried the privileges of polygamy, plainly told him that such a state of criminality was incompatible with the purity of baptism, that he must first remove this obstacle, and then, according to his disposition, of which his conduct would be the proof, he would be admitted to the instructions necessary to baptism. "Very well," replied the prince, "I will at once put an end to this hindrance;" and, in effect, he did that very same day inform his wives that it was his intention to embrace the law of Him who had restored him to health, and that as this law interdicted polygamy, he was determined to retain but one amongst them for his wife. He assured them at the same time that he would provide suitably for all the rest.

The youngest of Teriadeven's wives regarded his decision as the most fatal of all measures, the execution of which must immediately be prevented. In a transport of fury she hastened to Rangadaneven, who happened to be her uncle, explained to him the deplorable state to which she

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was about to be reduced, and conjured him to avert the threatened blow by the interposition of his authority. Her passion being aroused, she did not stop here; she appealed to the Bramins. Shame, fury, vexation, and revenge urged her on, animating her soul and embittering her expressions. She addressed herself to the chief priest of the idols, and earnestly besought him to prevent the ignominy about to be inflicted on herself and companions. She urged him to use his influence and that of the Bonzes over the king, and to unite at once with her in destroying the author of a scheme which would first sacrifice her, and then ruin themselves. Hell could not have suggested an artifice better calculated to maintain its own conquests, nor one more injurious to the cause of the faith. The Bramins hastened to the capital. The Regulo had already been touched by the complaints of his niece; it was therefore not difficult for the enemies of religion to confirm him in his malevolent impressions with regard to Father De Britto and Christianity. The Bramins advanced whatever they thought likely to exasperate the prince; they assured him that their gods were irritated by the contempt shown them, and by the sort of partiality shown to an unknown sect to the prejudice of a belief as ancient as the empire itself. They threatened him to shut up all the temples, to forsake his party and his kingdom, and to draw down upon him all the scourges that could avenge Bruma and his ministers; adding, "Besides, prince, what a disgrace to your reign that a seducer should be allowed with impunity to

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overthrow the most sacred and inviolable of our laws,—that he should separate the husband from his wives, and even venture to attack your own family, your niece, the object of your tenderness. Ah, perish this enemy of the gods! lest we and you too should perish!"

The Regulo saw through the motives of the Bonzes in speaking thus audaciously, and that avarice was the stimulus of a set of men who enriched themselves at the expense of the credulity of the people. Nevertheless their clamours, joined to the tears of his niece, aroused his anger. He ordered the houses of the Christians to be given up to fire and pillage, imposing a heavy pecuniary tax on their owners, so that they were reduced to the greatest misery. Father De Britto had foreseen the impending storm; and on that very morning had administered the sacraments to a great number of his neophytes, forewarning them of the persecution preparing for them by the spirit of darkness. Not one of them would consent to forsake their common father, or shun the danger by flight, as he advised them. It was on the eighth of January that this fearful tempest broke forth, and spread with terrific effect over the Christian populations of Madura. Twenty soldiers were despatched to seize Father De Britto, and convey him to prison. He met the savage troop with a serene and modest countenance. The first treatment he received at their hands convinced him of the future cruelties in reserve for him. After beating him with their fists and with rods, as well as one of his catechists,

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named John, the soldiers loaded both of them with chains and led them to prison, amidst the shouts and insults of the pagan populace.

Two young Christians (the oldest of them not more than fourteen years old) were deeply distressed at witnessing the indignities heaped on their beloved pastor; full of the spirit of God they forced a passage through the soldiers and idolaters, and approaching Father De Britto, they bathed him with their tears, and embraced him tenderly. They were instantly seized, bound together, and dragged on in the suite of the holy missionary. The executioners advanced with hurried strides. Father De Britto's old wounds and his state of exhaustion, produced, less perhaps, by this forced march, than by the penitential life which he had led for ten years in Madura, (and for more than sixteen from the period of his arrival in his Indies) caused him to stumble and fall several times: everywhere did he leave traces of his blood.

The four victims first reached the village of Anoumandacouri, where they were fastened to the triumphal car of the idol of the country, whose festival was that day celebrated; more than ten thousand idolaters assisted at it. The Bonzes determined to enhance the splendour of the solemnity by these illustrious trophies of victory for their pagodas. The idol was carried round all the environs of the village. The Father and his companions were tied to the back of the car. Sinking beneath an additional load of chains, they were dragged along, for walking it could hardly be

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called, and spent the whole day under this torture, as painful as it was humiliating. On the morrow the prisoners were taken to the regal city of Ramandabouran. The glorious band increased on the road. One of the most zealous of Father De Britto's catechists was added to their number; his name was Moutapen. He was commissioned to assemble the Christians in a small chapel situated at a considerable distance from the centre of the mission; and he was actually engaged in giving them instructions. The Regulo gave the order; the chapel and all the habitations of the Christians were burnt; the catechist was arrested, and conducted to the nearest point where he might meet and be associated with this holy troop.

Moutapen a captive for the faith was a most consoling spectacle to Father De Britto and the other confessors of Jesus Christ; it moreover tended to strengthen the invincible constancy of the neophytes. The more the number of these heroes increased, the more did they mutually animate each other to confront torments and death itself.

As soon as Father De Britto and his companions reached the capital, Rangadeneven was informed of it; he happened to be engaged on very important affairs, and therefore merely ordered them to be securely lodged in prison. Prince Teriadeven was not apprized of what had taken place till very late; he was left in ignorance of the stratagems employed by the Bonzes to irritate the Regulo, as well as of the cruel treat-

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ment inflicted on Father De Britto. He loudly complained of these proceedings, but being unable to counteract the order given by the prince of Marava for the imprisonment of the father, he used his best endeavours to soften the rigours of his captivity. He was not obeyed; the prisoners were subjected to the most cruel treatment; their nourishment consisted only of a little milk, generally sour, and such as the soldiers of the prison had rejected.

In the meantime the Bramins, elated by success, did all they could to foment the anger of the Regulo, urging him to put Father De Britto to death; they again reverted to his personal interests, declaring on the part of the gods, that he would not remain tranquil on his throne until he had soothed their indignation by the death of their most dangerous enemy. The generous Teriadeven was overwhelmed with grief at the injustice of which innocence was about to be made the victim, and everywhere expressed his indignation. He detested the perfidy and malice of the Bonzes, and remonstrated against the tyranny of Rangadaneven, should he condemn the prisoners without hearing them, and without confronting them with their accusers. The tyrant in a transport of fury commanded the illustrious catechumen to be silent; he loaded him with threats and reproaches, and declared that he would incur his eternal hatred, unless he instantly adored the domestic gods of his palace. Teriadeven indignantly rejected the odious proposition, telling the Regulo, that though he was master

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of his life, never should he induce him to consent to so monstrous an impiety, and that he would never again offer that homage to false divinities, due only to Jesus Christ his deliverer.

A young Christian nobleman was present at this interview between the Regulo and Teriadeven; he had received baptism after being miraculously cured of a malady of nine years' duration. Terrified by the threats of the tyrant, who insisted on his instantaneous worship of the idols, he dared not disobey, and had the weakness to present himself as an adorer in the pagoda. Heaven soon punished his ingratitude and impiety. His old complaint returned, and soon reduced him to extremity; his religion then revived, and became again his resource. He heard and attended to the reproaches of a merciful justice whispering in the recesses of his heart. He called for a crucifix, and taking it in his hands he kissed it, bathed it with his tears, imploring the clemency of his Saviour, and loudly detesting his crime, he persevered and died in sentiments of sincere repentance. The impious prince flattered himself that this nobleman's apostacy would be lasting, and that Teriadeven would follow his example. But quite the contrary; the latter seemed only the more confirmed in his attachment to the Christian faith; and he again assured Rangadaneven that he was ready to shed his blood, or even die, rather than betray it like a recreant. To his last breath he was true to all he had promised of gratitude and fidelity to the gospel. He received baptism a short time before his death,

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and he did honour to his faith by deeds worthy of a perfect Christian. In the meantime the tyrant told Teriadeven that he would prove to him how far superior the worship of his gods was to that of the infamous sect of the Pranguys; to verify his assertion, he declared, that before the expiration of three days, his guilty teacher would die;—the gods would deprive him of his life without touching his person. To accomplish this feat, he ordered the immediate preparation of a certain composition of sorcery, which the Indians believe to be infallible. He spent three days in his operations, which, according to the received notions of the country, would certainly annihilate Father De Britto. In spite of the remonstrances of some of the most sincere and least passionate of the Bonzes, who told him that his sorcery was powerless against a man who ridiculed their gods, and who was even feared by them; he persisted in three successive trials of his experiment, and always with the same success. The masters of this diabolic art were as confounded as their pupil, nevertheless they reassured the Regulo, and promised to offer new sacrifices, mingling in them magical operations, more powerful than any hitherto employed; the father's death was certainly to be compassed in five days. They worked with all the ardour that rage could inspire; they were not without fear of chastisement, in case their promises were not realized; still their last attempts were as unsuccessful as the first. The prince of Marava was in despair at being thus foiled in presence of his whole

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court; the affair was discreditable to the Bonzes, as it exposed their impositions. He sent for Father De Britto, and pointing to the Breviary which he held in his hand, inquired whether it was by means of that enchanted book that he was able to elude the effect of his magic. The father answered that that book had no connection with anything so detestable as sorcery; being consecrated to nothing but the praises of the true God. The provoked tyrant ordered the breviary to be suspended round his neck, and that he should be led to the market-place, and there shot to death, adding with insulting irony, that no doubt his book would render him invulnerable. The cruel sentence was on the point of being executed, when prince Teriadeven forced his way through the soldiers and forbade them to fire; then turning to the Regulo, he told him that his cruelty would not be left unpunished if he ventured to destroy so worthy a man. The tyrant instantly stopped the execution, being fearful of a riot. The crown belonged by right to Teriadeven, as he well knew; moreover, the people and many of the nobles were extremely attached to him. The Regulo thought it better not to offend them, and so prevent a revolution which might prove fatal to himself. He forebore, therefore, and remanded the father to prison, taking measures at the same time for sending him to his brother, prince Ouriardeven, who lived at a distance of two days' journey from his court, giving him orders to have the father secretly put to death as soon as he arrived.

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Father De Britto was informed of the Regulo's designs, for which he rendered heartfelt thanks to God. Notwithstanding the joy that filled his soul at the near approach of the consummation of his sacrifice, he deeply felt leaving his dear companions; he could have wished that Heaven had permitted them to remain together in circumstances so critical; nevertheless, full of confidence in Him who had hitherto sustained them amidst such heavy trials, he submitted to the adorable will of God, and bade a last farewell to his disconsolate flock. At that sorrowful moment love and grief burst forth on the part of the father and of the children. The very pagans could not restrain their tears at so moving a sight, but God required this mutual sacrifice; they resigned themselves and separated.

The generous missionary was by no means in a state to undertake the journey, and still less was he able to walk it; enfeebled by all he had suffered, covered with wounds, attenuated by partial starvation, and overpowered by the blows incessantly showered upon him, he stumbled or fell at almost every step. Apprehensive lest he should not reach his journey's end alive, one of the Bramins lent him a horse for the remainder of the road. He bore up against these toils, to the astonishment of those who accompanied him; they owned that any one else but himself could not (short of death) have endured such sufferings, and that certainly the preservation of his life must have been owing to some superhuman succour. The invincible confessor reached the vil-

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lage where he was to receive his long-coveted crown, on the thirty-first of January. The place was called Orejour, and is a large village, dividing the kingdom of Tanjaor from the principality of Marava, and is situated on the borders of the river Bombard. Ouriardeven ordered the father to be at once ushered into his presence, having previously summoned several Bonzes to meet him there. They were beginning a discussion on religion, when the prince interrupted both the father and his adversaries. He was suffering from paralypsis in his hands and feet, and was much more anxious to be cured than to be instructed, so he entreated his prisoner to restore him to health, of which he had been deprived for many years; he desired all his wives to prostrate themselves at the father's feet, and solicit the same favour. Liberty, wealth, and honours, should reward him in case of compliance; the prince solemnly pledging himself to that effect. The father modestly answered, that the prince might keep all his advantages to himself,—that none of them were any temptation to him, and that all the riches in the world could not purchase the sudden cure he asked for; God alone being able to grant it without the help of human means. For the rest he offered to teach him, and procure for him all that the experience and ability of men prescribe in cases similar to his own, frankly adding, that he would not be effectually cured until he found the health of his soul, by the worship of the true God. This answer provoked the savage chief, who ordered the holy missionary to

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be locked up, and gave him orders to prepare for the torture. For three days the father tasted nothing but a little milk. On the eve of his death he wrote to Father Francis Laynez, the superior of the mission; a straw served for his pen, whilst his ink consisted of powdered coal moistened with his spittle. We give his letter, which has been preserved as a precious treasure. Father De Britto intended to address it to all the missionaries, through their common superior.

"My dear Father Superior, and all you, my dear brethren in Jesus Christ, peace in our Lord!

"Canajen, our catechist, will have informed you of all that has happened to me since my arrest. On the 28th of January I was brought to the tribunal of the Regulo, and sentenced to death. I was condemned to be shot, and was led to the place of execution; the soldiers were on the point of firing, when the Regulo, fearing a disturbance, sent me back to prison; three days later I was separated from my companions, those glorious confessors of Jesus Christ, and was sent by the prince to his brother Ouriardeven, for him to put me to death. I reached his palace on the last day of January. I suffered extremely on the journey. I have been brought to the tribunal of this prince, and am now momentarily expecting death for my God and for my Saviour; this has ever been the sole object of my desires in my vocation to the Indies. How happy I am to find it at last after all my prayers and toils: what glory will it not ensure me! The only crime I am accused of is, that of having taught the law

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of Jesus Christ, and of having combated the worship of idols; as this crime is a virtue, the punishment cannot be otherwise than honourable to me; and this is my greatest consolation in the chains which fetter me. God is everything to me: I am now under the eyes of a set of soldiers, which prevents me from writing more in detail. Adieu, my dear fathers. I beg your blessing and your prayers.

"Your unworthy servant in Jesus Christ, John De Britto, of the Society of Jesus. From the prison of Orejour, the 3rd of February, 1693."

The Father likewise commissioned a Christian Bramin to convey the assurance of his last good wishes to all whom he knew and honoured at Pondicherry. This Indian would not abandon him throughout the whole course of the persecution. He had even sometimes the privilege of preparing the little food allowed to the father and his companions. It was this Bramin who gave all the details of the sufferings of the pastor and his little flock; he used to relate them with tears in his eyes, nor were those who heard him less affected. It was to this faithful Christian that Father De Britto gave the crucifix he always wore on his breast; he gave it him the night before his death, for fear it might be profaned by the infidels if he wore it at the moment of his execution; he kept his reliquary, however, which could not be recovered, although eagerly sought for. The Bramin remitted the crucifix to Father Laynez, who sent it to Pondicherry with the garments of the venerable martyr; the

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crucifix was afterwards sent to the professed house of the society in Paris.

The 4th of February was the day of Father John De Britto's death. In the morning an additional number of soldiers, together with five executioners, entered the prison; when, by order of the prince, the Father was given up to their cruelty. The tribunal condemned him to have his head, hands, and feet cut off, and then to be empaled. As soon as he saw the savages coming towards him, he advanced with an air of meekness which ought to have disarmed their fury; but they, mindful only of their own violent passions, fell upon the father, dragged him about, struck him on the head, kicked him, and then led him, bathed as he was in his own blood, to the place of execution. An immense number of idolaters hastened thither; the Bonzes were dispersed amongst the crowd, exciting the fury of the pagans, who vomited forth their insults against the innocent victim, whom they were so delighted to see at last sacrificed to their gods. The father requested a few moments for prayer, which were granted. He knelt down beside the gibbet on which he was to be fastened, and made an offering of his life to Jesus Christ; he prayed for the salvation of the Indians; especially for the authors and instruments of his death; and recommended himself to Jesus dying on the cross. He made all these acts aloud, and the fervour with which he uttered them drew tears even from many of the Gentiles, who were struck at the tranquilityl displayed by the confessor of Jesus Christ. "What

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a religion, " exclaimed they in admiration, " that can inspire such courage in the presence of all that could naturally subdue it!" Father De Britto's prayer lasted for a quarter of an hour: he then turned to his executioners, embraced them, and said, "Do your duty, I am ready." At that moment the cruel satellites tore his cassock, and stripped him, one of them seeing a small box suspended round his neck (it was his reliquary) advised his companions not to touch it, lest it should be some dangerous charm; whereupon one of the others raised his hatchet and struck the father on the neck, inflicting a severe gash. They then successively tried to cut off his head, but without success. Desperate, and ashamed of their own cruelty, they seized the servant of God by his beard, fastened a string to it, which by being drawn tightly round the waist, drew the head down towards his breast, and under the idea that a magic spell had blunted their own hatchets, used in the execution of criminals, they armed themselves with others, employed in sacrificing the victims slaughtered in the pagodas. One of the executioners advanced in a fury, inflicted a deadly blow, which laid the father lifeless at his feet. Although the body was bent forward by the forced position given it, it fell backwards, the head nearly separated from the shoulders, and the eyes turned up towards heaven. The other executioners came forward, completely severed the head from the trunk, cut off the hands and feet; and then empaled the body with the head, joining them together.

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Whilst Father De Britto was thus presenting the spectacle of his last sacrifice to heaven and earth, and whilst he was actually kneeling before the gibbet, awaiting the stroke of death, God gave him the consolation of seeing his own faith and courage transmitted to the heart of his neophytes. Two Christians who were present purposely to witness the last acts of their saintly father, could not resist the fervour inspired by his fortitude, and rushing through the crowd, heedless of the rage of their enemies, they cast themselves at Father De Britto's feet. In vain did the soldiers try to tear them away, they insisted on dying in the same cause, for that as children they were determined not to survive their father. The executioners at length drew them off, and to prevent similar demonstrations of generosity on the part of the neophytes, they hastened to complete their vengeance on him whose presence and courage might yet produce impressions injurious to idolatry; and this apprehension stimulated their cruelty, already impatient enough, to immolate the victim surrendered to them.

The two new Confessors of the Faith had the happiness later of sharing the glory of Father De Britto, though not as fully as they had hoped and expected. They were condemned to have their noses and ears cut off; this opprobrium was to them a subject of triumph, and the occasion of fresh merit; they showed themselves everywhere with intrepidity, and with evident delight at having been judged worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus Christ.

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As soon as the execution was over the idolaters placed guards round the scaffold, to hinder the Christians from approaching to carry off the body. They did their very utmost to procure some of his precious relics, but notwithstanding their offers and promises, the soldiers would not give up the smallest particle; on the contrary, they most jealously watched the body until it was burnt. In spite of all the vigilance and hatred of the Bonzes, God would not permit the Christians to be left entirely without a remnant of his precious body. After long search one of the Christians was fortunate enough to find a large portion of the holy martyr's head. On turning over an accumulation of ashes and cinders, near the spot where the body had been burnt, he picked up the lower jaw, which had been spared by the flames; in high delight he respectfully kissed it, carried it secretly away, and remitted it to Father Laynez. For the rest, no other of Father De Britto's relics could be recovered, excepting such trifling articles as had served his useful and necessary purposes.

Large sums of money were repeatedly offered for the staff he had used on his journeys, for his cassock, and for the cords and hatchets used in his execution, but always in vain: the Gentiles declared they would never part with them, for they found them a protection against malignant spirits.

All that could be collected of his clothing, writings, objects of devotion, and instruments of penance, as well as the fragment of his bones,

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were forwarded to Pondicherry by Father Laynez, who had carefully examined them, and stamped them with his seal. Father De Britto's friend, Monsignor Martin, already spoken of, had charge of them at first, until they were deposited in the sacristy of the Jesuit's Church at Pondicherry. Father Tascard, and successively the other superiors there, were commissioned to watch over the holy relics, which are still shown in a cabinet adjoining the church.

Five Christian Bramins of acknowledged probity and piety accompanied the relics to Pondicherry, and bore juridical testimony on the formalities required on similar occasions. Two of them had been in prison with Father De Britto, whilst the third was one of the two who had thrown themselves at Father De Britto's feet just before his death, and who had their ears and noses only cut off, whereas they themselves had expected to give, like him, their lives for Jesus Christ. All the five had long been in the habit of accompanying the father on his missionary excursions.

After the death of the pastor, alarm soon spread through the flock; the persecution still continued. The tyrant, urged on by the ministers of idolatry, used every means for the destruction of Christianity: he appointed pagan sacrifices in various parts of his dominions, enjoining all his subjects to assist at them under grievous penalties. Father Laynez hastened to the succour of the new Christians; the soil, watered by the blood of its apostle, became still more productive; the result, no doubt, of the blessings procured for

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it by the intercession of the holy martyr, already in possession of the reward due to his zeal and labours.

We cannot better complete this faithful account of the virtues, combats, and victories of Father De Britto, than by briefly inserting the eulogies of him, forwarded to us by those who had been the longest and most intimately acquainted with him. The portrait will give us an idea of what nature and grace had bestowed so liberally on a servant who turned everything to the profit of his Divine Master. We cannot lawfully omit a single feature that can perpetuate the memory of a hero so dear to religion, and so worthy of being imitated by all, who, like him, are employed either in announcing or defending it. Father John De Britto was of delicate constitution, of middle height, of engaging countenance, his face rather long, with well proportioned nose, small but lively penetrating eyes, bespeaking unwavering kindness and affability: his hair and beard were black, with latterly a slight sprinkling of grey: the heat of the climate had somewhat darkened his complexion. As for the qualities of his mind and heart, they corresponded with the elevated functions entrusted to him by Heaven.

His zeal for the propagation of religion was not confined to the missions wherein he laboured; the old and new hemispheres were alike the objects of his charity. Wherever there were men to be found, there did his fervent desires extend for their salvation; because he knew there were souls there redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ,

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and therefore deserving of all the labours of the ministers of the gospel. He took a lively interest in the triumphs of the Catholic faith in Europe, and wrote in terms of sincere satisfaction to the fathers at Pondicherry, when he heard of the measures adopted by, and the success which crowned the zeal of the king of France, in favour of the Catholic religion. To this universal zeal Father De Britto joined a noble elevation of character, penetrating wit, great maturity of judgment; he was circumspect in his decisions, firm in excution; intrepid, beneficent, liberal and generous in his whole plan of his apostolic life; everywhere he made himself loved by the simplicity of his manners, the unalterable meekness of his character, and by the pleasure which he evidently felt in obliging every one. We find him the same in his letters as he was in his actions. In fine, we may with truth say that grace bestowed her most signal favours on Father John De Britto in the same degree as we are accustomed to see and admire them in those chosen souls which she trains to all that is most elevated in virtue; viz, an inexhaustible charity, an invincible courage, a wisdom which had God alone for its end; the most submissive and devoted attachment to the Church; a discernment which enabled him promptly to see and choose that which was most advantageous to souls; a perseverance which overcame the greatest obstacles; an austerity to himself superior to all the necessities of life, and the most fatiguing of labours; a remarkable esteem of the grace of his

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vocation, and a warm affection for the Society of Jesus, to which he had been called; a delicacy of conscience which scarcely afforded his confessors matter for absolution; a love of God so tender and fervent as to lead him to wish for nothing but the happiness of giving his life in sacrifice to Him. Here, then, we behold what was constantly exhibited in Father De Britto, and what made him a perfect religious, an ardent missionary, a new apostle, a man of God.

In a word, what the records of the Church relate of S. Chrysostom, as having chosen S. Paul for his protector and model, may be also applied to Father De Britto and his imitation of, and resemblance to S. Francis Xavier. Animated by the example, and supported by the protection of the Apostle of the Indies, the missionary of Madura, in his own apostolate, revived all the zeal and all the courage of the Thaumaturgus of these latter ages. This illustrious martyr and confessor of Jesus Christ,—this evangelical labourer, worthy of immortal praise, died for the faith at the age of forty-five, on the 4th of February, 1693, in the reign of Rangadeven, usurper of the principality of Marava.

So many admirable deeds, offsprings of the most heroic virtue, have determined the Holy See to begin the process for the canonization of Father John De Britto. Benedict XIV. thus eagerly strove to rescue his memory from the calumnies which a certain writer, (who undertook to censure that which ought to be beyond the reach of censure) has published against the

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conduct pursued by the holy missionary in the conversion of the Indians. Yielding to a prejudice which the love of truth neither admits nor adopts, this accuser has had recourse to the most odious means to prevent the beatification of the servant of God. Whilst Providence was furnishing means for unmasking falsehood, with equal prudence and success the sovereign Pontiff denounced the work which brought forward such rash and incorrect statements. After several times hearing the reports of the Promoter of the Faith, who thoroughly sifted these objections, his Holiness declared in a decree, dated the 2nd of July, 1741, and in another, dated the 1st of April, 1745, "That all these objections are not sufficient to hinder a continuation of the cause of the venerable servant of God, John De Britto, of the Society of Jesus, and from making all necessary researches with regard to the martyr and the cause of his martyrdom, as well as on the miracles said to have been granted by God through his intercession."

The edifying history here presented to the public could not be better supported, or have a more advantageous authority in its favour; facts which the Church undertakes to examine (in her own well-known form of rigour) with a view of awarding solemn honours to the martyrs, acquire, by this very research, a credit and a weight calculated to awaken both confidence and veneration in the faithful. This conduct of the Church is at once a glorious pre-judgment in favour of the detail of the virtues and sanctity of the hero who combined them all in his own person.

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We will conclude this account of the virtues of the venerable servant of God, with the inscription placed at the foot of his picture, kept at Pondicherry; it is in perfect uniformity with all the moving incidents herein related of this hero of the gospel ministry.

"To the glory of Almighty God!

Here lives again a minister cherished by God and men: the venerable servant of God, John De Britto, a Portuguese. He was born with a noble soul. In his youth he made great progress in wisdom and in virtue. He fulfilled all the duties of his vocation to the Society of Jesus. His ardent zeal for the salvation of souls carried him to missions in distant countries, where he preached the name of Jesus Christ before nations and kings. He made himself all to all, and worthily acquitted himself of his apostolate. He suffered much from toils and vigils; he undertook frequent journeys; he wandered in deserts; encountered perils on rivers and from robbers. Regardless of the threats and fury of the tyrant of Marava, he confronted and suffered opprobrium, whips, chains, and imprisonment. Led to death like a lamb, he sacrificed himself for his flock; and, a true victim of charity, he gave his life for the faith of Jesus Christ, on the 4th of February, 1693.

The following is the original Latin inscription:

D. O. M.

Hic reviviscit
Dilectus Deo et hominibus
Venerabilis P. Joannes De Britto
Lusitanus.

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In juventute suâ sortitus animam
bonam, profecit virtute et sapientiâ,
Ambulans dignè vocatione quà vocatus est
in Societatem Jesu.
Zelo zelatus missus ad extremum terræ,
Ut portaret nomen Christi
Coram Gentibus et Regibus.
Omnibus omnia factus
Ministerium suum dignè implevit ;
In laboribus plurimis, in vigiliis,
In itineribus frequenter, in solitudinibus
Errans, in periculis fluminum,
In periculis latronum.
Non veritus minas et iram Regis
Maravarici, ludibria et verbera
Expertus, insuper et vincula
et Carceres.
Pastor bonus
Pro ovibus suis, tanquam ovis
Ad occisionem ductus
Charitatis victima,
Animam suam dedit pro fide Christi,
Anno 1693. IV. Febr.

In obedience to the decree of our holy father, Pope Urban VIII., I declare and protest that I submit to the judgment of the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman Church, all that I have related in the Life of Father John De Britto ; and all that would seem to affirm his sanctity, his miracles, and his martyrdom.

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The following account of Father De Nobili, mentioned in the early part of Father De Britto's Life, will probably be acceptable to the pious reader; it is taken from Cretineau-Joly's "Historie de la Compagniė de Jesus."

"In Hindostan none but the Parias adopted the cross, as the emblem of their proscription, as the aurora of a new hope for them. To them the cross was equality; this equality wounded the susceptibilities of the upper castes, the Bramins and the Rajahs, who would see nothing beyond the cross but the sword of Albuquerque, or of other adventurers who followed in his train. The Parias had sought refuge and consolation in the gospel. The gospel was declared despicable, precisely because the Parias had accepted it. In the eyes of the missionaries, the salvation of this condemned class was perhaps more highly prized than that of the Bramins; by it they raised those vast multitudes, which for so many ages had groaned beneath the weight of an universal anathema; the Jesuits, however, were not satisfied with inspiring them with a sense of human dignity; they saw that it would be necessary to carry the faith to the heart of the privileged classes, in order to render the condition of their first neophytes more endurable; there was no want of good will, but the means seemed to be beyond even the reach of zeal, until the year 1605, when Robert De Nobili (a name connected with the See of S. Peter, by the sovereign Pontiffs Julius III., and Marcellus II.; and to the German crown by Otho III.,) landed at Goa.

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"Born at Montepulciano in 1577, he, like Bellarmine his uncle, repudiated worldly honours to enter the Society of Jesus. Trained by Father Orlandini, he devoted himself to the missions, and at the age of twenty-eight, he repaired to the new world, urged on by zeal for gospel conquests. His predecessors on the shores of the Indus and Ganges, the missionaries of the Carnatic, of Ginghi and Tanjaor, had allowed themselves to be weighed down by discouragement: they had made themselves the brethren of the proscribed caste; the Bramins therefore, for that very reason, struck their apostolate with sterility. The Bramins, the priests and doctors of the nation, would not deign to descend from the heights of their vanity to humble themselves before a religion which the Parias adopted. The Jesuits saw that all their labours could thus never effect the object they had in view. They were dwelling amidst a race under the ban of infamy; nothing salutary, nothing fruitful could result from this self-devotedness. Robert De Nobili had the idea of doing otherwise; he believed that a new mode of action ought to be attempted.

"Out of hatred to the Parias, the Bramins rejected Christianity and the Jesuits. Nobili, who was entrusted with the Madura missions, hoped to make the gospel acceptable, if presented to the Bramins in a form less suspicious to their pride. He made himself a Bramin, that is to say, he assumed the manners, the language, and the costume of the Saniassis, or penitent Bramins—the most honoured of all the castes of Hindostan.

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Like them he dwelt in a turf hut, and condemned himself to a life of the greatest austerity and privation. He abstained from flesh, fish, and from liquors. His head was shaved, a single tuft being left upon the crown; wooden sandals fastened to his feet with a peg, made walking painful to him; in place of a hat he wore a cylindrical-shaped cap of flame coloured silk; the cap was surmounted with a long veil, falling over the shoulders; a muslin robe, rich ear-rings hanging down upon his neck, whilst the forehead of the Jesuit was stained with a yellow mark, caused by the bark of the sandal tree.

"When in the silence of his grotto, to which no one had access, he had succeeded in identifying himself with the customs and ceremonies of the country, Nobili began to carry his plans to effect; plans which the Jesuits and the Archbishop of Cranganore had approved of. The transformation was so perfect that Father Robert was no longer an European, even in the eyes of the Bramins; he was become holy and learned like themselves. The Bramins questioned him on the subject of his nobility; he declared that he was the descendant of an illustrious race; his oath to this effect was registered, and they gave him the name of Tatouva-Podaga-Souami, which means a man who has passed master through the ninety-six qualities of the truly wise.

"The Indians say that 'Gold and pearls lie hidden; to obtain them great toil is necessary." Nobili had well considered this proverb, and applied it duly. He knew that ungratified curi-

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osity is a stimulant, and therefore held himself on the reserve; paid no visits; receiving as few as possible, and on that very account drew public attention on himself. A report of his learning and austerities began to circulate amongst the Bramins, many of whom expressed a wish to hear him; Nobili at last yielded to their wishes. He opened school, and by mingling heavenly doctrine with human learning, he soon succeeded in making his auditors admire the dogmas and laws of the Christian religion. Four years after his arrival in Madura, Nobili had overcome extraordinary obstacles, and he gathered the fruit of his perseverance. A few of the Bramins began to prostrate themselves before the cross; the mystery of human equality was disclosed to them, and Christianity became ennobled in their opinion. The king of Madura was instructed in it, purposing to embrace it, but the Bramins, who had not yet submitted their pride to the humiliations of Calvary, massacred the prince in a pagoda, and then, like the early Romans, declared that the gods had carried off this Indian Romulus to the abode of glory.

Nobili had triumphed by a miracle of courage and patience. Europeans made a crime of his triumph; this fact was explained away by asserting that he had made himself a Bramin, and encouraged superstition and idolatry, for no other purpose than to gain an accession of power to the Society of Jesus. These imputations were carried to such a height, and were accredited by such authority, that in 1618 Father Robert

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was cited in person to appear before the archbishop of Goa. Nobili hastened thither at the order of his superiors. When Father Palmerio, (the visiter of the Indies,) and the other Jesuits saw him in his new costume, one loud universal cry of indignation was raised against him. Nobili had expected this, and prepared his defence accordingly. It was peremptory, and completely silenced the preconceived opinion of the Jesuits; but it was not so favourably received at the archbishop's tribunal. The question was a delicate one; from Goa, where every one treated it according to his own passion, his faith, or his prejudices, it was carried to the Holy See. There, even on the very steps of the Pontifical throne, Nobili encountered a censurer in the person of his uncle cardinal Bellarmine. The Jesuit, strong in the purity of his intentions, and convinced, moreover, that there was no other means of planting Christianity amongst the Bramins, stood firm against all objections. He resisted with such energy, and so eloquently demonstrated the expediency of his plans, that Almeyda, the inquisitor of Goa, was convinced by his reasonings; the Dominican undertook to plead the cause of the Jesuit. On the 31st of January, 1623, Gregory XV. authorised the father to pursue his project, at least until the Holy See had again examined the question.

"The question of the Malabar rites was thus adjourned, and Robert De Nobili might with a safe conscience return to his strange labours. He resumed them after an interval of five years'

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debate; he continued them up to the very moment when blindness disabled him from labouring any longer for the salvation of the Indians he had consecrated his youth and his mature age to them, in his retirement at the college of Jafanatapan, and afterwards in that of San-Thomé, he would likewise consecrate his last hours to them. A life of activity was no longer possible to the blind missionary; he employed himself in composing books in each of the Hindostanee dialects, to smooth the difficulties which such complicated idioms must occasion to the Europeans. On the 16th of January, 1656, Robert De Nobili died at the age of eighty, and his tomb, situated at no great distance from Madura, is still an object of veneration to the Indians.

"To pursue the path traced out by Robert De Nobili, who had brought over more than a hundred thousand Bramins, men of no ordinary stamp were indispensably requisite; men who, like him, would renounce their own habits and inclinations, and who could create for themselves an existence wholly at variance with the customs of their own country. After the lapse of a few years, another Jesuit fertilized the mission which the death of De Nobili had interrupted. This Jesuit was John De Britto, son of one of the Viceroys of Brazil. In 1672 De Britto, like Nobili, tore himself away from the tears of his family, the entreaties of his friends and of Don Pedro de Braganza, Regent of Portugal, and in the flower of his age, hastening to Madura, he too made himself a Saniasis. He possessed an ardour duly moderated by pru-

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dence, and was well versed in the Indian as well as in the European sciences: he was therefore able to effect prodigies in a few years. Madura did not satisfy his zeal. De Britto penetrated into the kingdoms of Tanjaor and Ginghi; he opened the way for the Jesuits to Mysore; and preached the faith to, and conferred baptism on thirty thousand idolaters of Malabar. In one place he was scourged; in another, carried in triumph; loaded with chains by some, and honoured by others, till after twenty years of alternate persecution and joy, he was martyred on the 4th of February, 1693. The death of De Britto did not check the zeal which was directed towards those countries. The Church and the Society of Jesus had added another martyr to their annals; and three years later Indostan welcomed another Bramin missionary. The work of Nobili was, as it were, but a sketch; Father Constant Beschi, surnamed by the Indians The Great Viramamouni, was the man to complete the work."

A. M. D. G.

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